

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH

SOCER

VOL. 23 No. 1080 — TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2002



• REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIAN POST
• PUBLICATIONS No. NBQ5726

WEEKLY

\$3.60
GST INCLUSIVE

NSL REFORMS ON HOLD AGAIN

By Daniel Kuzlow

The much needed restructuring of the National Soccer League will be put on hold for at least another season after National Soccer League chairman Remo Nogarotto conceded that it was not feasible at this point in time.

"It's not the ideal position. I mean in many respects our hands are tied," Nogarotto told SBS television.

"There's obviously in impasse between Soccer Australia and its marketing partner, IEC, which needs to be resolved.

"We really can't move in isolation to that impasse being resolved.

"It's not the perfect world and I'm far from happy with it but that's life and you have to deal with it."

It has been a little over nine months since the last attempt at reform collapsed and the NSL clubs have only just recently elected to postpone an overhaul of the stricken national competition and

push forward with an expanded 14-team league.

Nogarotto continued, "Let's just say that a round number would be ideal and the sooner we know what the number is the better [because] as the clubs make the point, scheduling is paramount".

"We don't want to be in the position as we were at the beginning of this season's competition where Canberra Cosmos fell out at the last minute, so we need to determine what the number is".

"And it's got to be 14. We've got to find out whether there's a consortium out there that satisfies a marketing need."

Cashed up Queensland club the Brisbane Lions is the front runner for the 14th spot while South Australian State League side Adelaide Galaxy is also a contender.

However, Nogarotto has since revealed that next season competition might be a 12-team league, with the Auckland Kingz likely to be omitted from the league.

The Auckland-based side is in turmoil after its major shareholder

SKY TV reduced its stake in the club and seems the obvious target of the 12-team reforms.

"I think it is well chronicled that they have had a significant change in their share register" Nogarotto told SBS' On the Ball program.

"I would have preferred SKY TV retain their level of equality...[Now] we need to talk through with Auckland Kingz the repercussions of that".

Clearly looking towards the welfare of the struggling national competition the Commission chairman asked; "Where is the capital going to come from for the business to operate going forward if SKY Television are in there at 10 percent instead of 85 percent."

While seeming determined to gain an even compliment of teams for next season, Nogarotto nevertheless would not be drawn into any pre-conceptions about the demise of the Kingz or any other NSL club, instead choosing to diplomatically state; "...there are a number of red alerts out on clubs and it may be that the market through some form of natural attrition will get us to where we need to go.

Soccer Australia has also revealed the intention of introducing a salary cap to put an end to the spiralling player wage payments undermining NSL clubs.

Commenting on this particular issue, Nogarotto confessed the arrival of the professional and semi-professional-Perth Glory, Parramatta Power and Northern Spirit-was the main force behind higher player payments.

"The entry of new clubs, the world over inflates markets. Now what we need to have is a methodology or apparatus that deals with that. And that may well be a salary cap".

He also stressed that Soccer Australia needed to alter its perception of the effects that these new clubs have had on the player's market and to not underestimate the impact of those new entrants on the competition, while urging the Professional Footballers Association (PFA) to increase their responsibility for the current financial strain on clubs.



Remo Nogarotto: National League Commission Chairman wants to shake-up the National League.

QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION PRESIDENT TONY PETTY OUSTED

By Glenn Davis

Angry clubs and affiliates turned on Queensland Soccer Federation president Tony Petty who suffered an embarrassing defeat to stay at the helm of the States governing body at its annual general meeting on Sunday.

The controversial Petty lost power to fellow board member David Kay, who was elected overwhelmingly as the new president. Petty was opposed in the president's battle by Kay and QSF vice-president Elaine Watson but lost out in the first round.

He subsequently withdrew his nomination for treasurer and board member and later left the meeting. Watson's loss to Kay meant she no longer is on the QSF board, as she did not stand for another position.

Board member Paul Young was given the clubs' vote as treasurer and will have the responsibility of trying to turn around a massive \$88,000 loss, which the QSF incurred under Petty's reign.

Gordon Arrowsmith, who was a board member three years ago made a successful comeback winning the vice-president's role over Lawrence Oudendyk.

Petty came to power 15 months ago leading a coup against former president Wallace Dann, promising a new era and to open the books and correct any financial problems.



Tony Petty: Has lost the leading role in the QSF.

However, Petty's reign stumbled from controversy to controversy with board infighting and a dispute with Soccer Australia over who held the national league licence in Queensland, the QSF or the Brisbane Strikers.

Soccer Australia solved the wrangle by granting the Strikers a licence in its own right.

Petty was a former Strikers' chairman but resigned following a confidential out of court settlement in a long running ownership dispute with former Brisbane Lord Mayor and Strikers' major shareholder Clem Jones.

Petty recently suffered a humiliating defeat for vice-president at the inaugural general meeting of the newly constituted Brisbane men's soccer body.

Oudendyk, who also was a member of last year's coup team and is spearheading Queensland Lions' fight to play in the national league, withdrew his board nomination after his defeat for vice-president.

The newly elected board consists of Brisbane identities Ian Dalzell and Guido Canale, Gold Coast's Peter Williamson, Geoff Foster (Sunshine Coast), Blair Burke (Rockhampton) and Peter Arca (Far North Qld).

CAN ANYONE STOP THIS MAN?

By Mark Stavroulakis



What more can we say about the man of the moment in the National League, Stallions striker Royce Brownlie.

The former Brisbane Lions star has taken the league by storm with his phenomenal scoring feats in the past four weeks.

Brownlie has set a new National League record by scoring consecutive goals for a single club.

The goal scoring started back in Round 21 when the 22-year-old single handedly beat the Power by notching up a hat trick in the Stallions three-nil win.

Round 22 was a different affair, Marconi lost 3-1 away to Newcastle, however, Royce was the sole scor-

er for the away side.

Round 23, Brownlie added a further two to his tally after again steering the Stallions to a 2-1 win against the Force, the win kept them in the semi-final race.

Finally at Toyota Park last Sunday, that man again popped up and bagged yet another brace as the Stallions drew 2-2 with the Sharks.

Eight strikes in four matches isn't a bad rate for scoring goals, one thing's for sure, Socceroo coach Frank Farina will be keeping a watchful eye on the progression of this young man.

Brownlie currently sits on 11 goals for the season, and with two matches remaining, his form could lift him towards second top goal scorer of the National League. Not bad for a player that missed half of the season through injury.



Goal Scoring Machine Royce Brownlie celebrating one of his 11 goals this season.

Page 12
VSF to Support Socceroos

Page 23
Steve O'Connor: The Brains Behind the AIS

Page 25
Under the Microscope with Socceroo coach Frank Farina

Pages 27
Champions League Wrap-Up

Issue No. 1080

"Published every Tuesday by
F.L. Press
5-13 Garners Ave.,
Marrickville NSW 2204

TELEPHONE
(editorial and general enquiries)

Tel: (02) 9562 0559
or
Tel: (02) 9562 0565

(advertising)
John Economos
Tel: (02) 9744 6984
Ben Moring
Tel: 0438 849 053
or
Tel: (02) 9562 0567

E-MAIL
(editorial, advertising and general enquiries)

ABSW's new E-mail:
soccer@foreignlanguage.com.au

FACSIMILE
(editorial, advertising and general enquiries)
(02) 9550 9332 or (02) 9564 1224

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 155 Marrickville NSW 1475

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Sylvia Marinos
Phone: (02) 9562 0575
Australia: \$195 (GST incl.)
Overseas: \$255 (GST incl.)

EDITOR
Mark Stavroulakis

STAFF WRITER
Daniel Kuziow

LAYOUT/TYPESETTING
Mary Quartly, Alamita Vea

CORRESPONDENTS
Bert van Bedaf (Victoria Editor)
Alan Clarke (Melbourne)
Allan Crisp (Adelaide)
Glen Davis (Brisbane)
Otto Bader (Wollongong)
Richard Kreider (Perth)
Graham Cooke (Canberra)
Joe Russo (Sydney)
Roy Hay (Victoria)
Stuart Jones (Sydney)
SCANNING
Bill Hawthorne, Alex Siafakos
FILM PLANNING
Nick Phillips
PHOTOGRAPHY
Allsport

DISTRIBUTION
NSW/ACT:
FLP Pty Ltd. 5-13 Garners Ave,
Marrickville NSW 2204
Tel: (02) 9562 0500

VICTORIA:
FLP Pty Ltd. 72-78 Gipps Street,
Collingwood Vic 3066
Tel: (03) 9486 9522
Tel: (03) 9486 9858

QUEENSLAND:
Queensland Newspapers
Campbell St, Bowden Hills Qld. 4006
Tel: (07) 3252 6011

SOUTH AUSTRALIA:
Advertiser Newspapers Ltd.
Waymouth St, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: (08) 8218 9329

WESTERN AUSTRALIA:
Pan Hellenic Emporium,
67 James Street, Perth WA 6000
Tel: (08) 9328-4779
Recommended and maximum price.
\$3.60

*All material appearing in
Australian and British Soccer Weekly is
copyright and reproduction in any form
whatsoever is expressly forbidden without
the written permission of the publisher.
The publisher accepts no responsibility for
unsolicited manuscripts, illustrations or
photographic material.

Deadline for contributions, articles
and advertising is 3 days PRIOR to
issue date.



As it was reported in last week's issue of the ABSW, the Victorian Soccer Federation was opposed to locally-based Socceroos participating in their State League competition.

News however has surfaced that the Socceroos have obtained the support of the Victorian Soccer Federation (VSF) in their preparations for the Oceania Nations Cup in July, now opening the way for their Socceroos stars to play in the VSF's state competition.

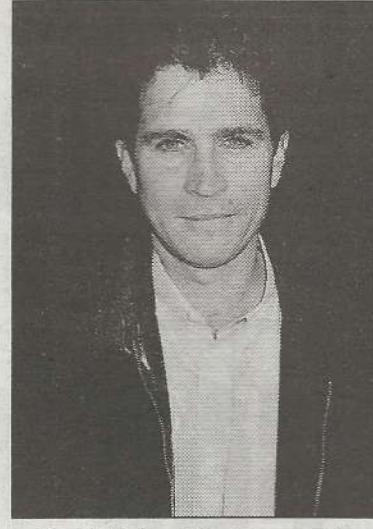
Soccer Australia and national coach Frank Farina had approached the state federation about the possibility of utilising the state league for match practice for Australian-based players and whilst initially flagging the

idea, VSF Chief Executive Geoff Miles came and declared he was holding discussions with SA and Farina about assisting the national team.

Speaking to theworldgame.com.au, Miles confessed; "We have been in touch with Soccer Australia and advised them what we consider to be suitable options for assisting the Socceroos preparation, and together we will be able to finalise a plan that ensures Victoria will play a supportive role in their future success".

Farina who has been unhappy with the scheduling of the competition is keen for his squad to be fully fit for the tournament, which serves as the qualifiers for the lucrative Confederations Cup.

Without the opportunity of involvement in the state league, many of the Socceroos will enter a planned training camp at the end of June well short of match fitness due to that



Frank Farina: Wants to use the state federation competitions as match fitness for future Socceroos.

period being right in the middle of the off-season.

"The VSF has been in preliminary discussions with Soccer Australia and has highlighted some positive options for any local (Victorian) players to maintain a good fitness level prior to this important OFC Nations Cup tournament," said Farina.

"I approached the NSL clubs and asked for their cooperation with any player requests to keep fit during the off-season prior to the training camp, and now that same request for assistance and cooperation will be made to the various State Federations."

"The VSF has suggested the possibility of the selected players from Victoria being involved with training and matches with the VIS squad, and then there is also the other option of the Victorian State team providing training and/or matches," said Farina.

BOUTSI TRANSFER SPIRALS INTO FARCE

By Bert van Bedaf

The Con Boutsianis transfer affair - in the case of South Melbourne versus the Football Kingz - is spiralling out of control and reaching the farcical as the season climaxes towards the finals.

More officials are wading into the argument than penguins waddling into the sea, with National Soccer League chairman Remo Nogorotto becoming the latest luminary to offer an opinion.

Speaking on SBS's *On The Ball* program last Sunday, Nogorotto admitted he wasn't completely versed in the details, but nonetheless he managed to describe the handling of the Boutsianis case as "Pythonesque".

It was enough to upset South Melbourne

chairman Peter Mitrakas, who told *Melbourne's Herald Sun*, "He (Nogorotto) needs to shut his trap. We sent a legal letter to Soccer Australia and we would be happy to include Mr Nogorotto in the writ."

Mitrakas also had a go at Nogorotto because of his former connection with the Northern Spirit. "As a former director of the Northern Spirit, Mr Nogorotto should stay out of this," Mitrakas said.

The Northern Spirit recently expressed their concerns, since South's points total could have a bearing on the Spirit's slim finals chances.

"We want the NSL to look into this and apply the rules," Spirit general manager Colin Mitchell recently suggested Soccer Australia should consider the matter.

When Boutsianis signed from the Kingz back to South Melbourne last January several

claims were made relating to transfer conditions.

The vital one was that an agreement existed that Boutsianis would not play against the Kingz in round 15. Another one was that as part of the agreement both clubs would not publicly reveal that the agreement existed.

Before match day, the Kingz announced the condition that Boutsianis would not play against them on their website and the announcement found its way into the New Zealand media.

South Melbourne played Boutsianis against the Kingz (he scored the winning goal in a 2-1 victory), claiming the Kingz had broken the agreement, which was set out in a letter between the clubs.

South later claimed there were no conditions stipulated on the transfer form, initialled by

Boutsianis, South and the Kingz - and that, therefore, no conditions of any kind existed or applied. The Kingz referred the case to Soccer Australia and demanded a tribunal hearing. South could lose its three points for the win, if the Kingz were proved right.

Although the Kingz had paid a \$1000 to have the case heard, Soccer Australia cancelled a tribunal hearing scheduled for February 28.

Soccer Australia said the wrangle did not come under its jurisdiction and that the clubs should sort it out between them.

Parramatta Power is in sixth place and a point ahead of South on the NSL ladder. Power coach David Mitchell described the affair as "a joke".

"What's been happening is a joke. It should never have been allowed to get to this stage," he told *The Australian*.

Basel's Aussie stars shine in Swiss Cup win

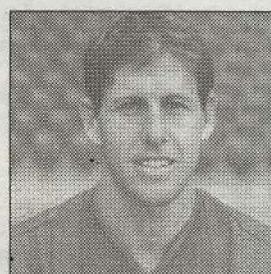
By Daniel Kuziow

Scott Chipperfield and Ivan Ergic were both on the scoresheet in FC Basel's 4-1 Swiss Cup victory over FC Zurich.

In front of nearly 7000 fans the former Wolves and Glory players helped Basel reach the semi-finals of the domestic cup competition for the first time in eight years.

Both players were handed a full 90 minutes by Basel manager Christian Gross and each found themselves on the scoresheet.

Ergic scored a superb individual goal just before half-time, drifting past three challenges before driving the ball past a flat footed Zurich goal-



Scott Chipperfield: The former Wolves star is enjoying his football in the Swiss League.



Ivan Ergic: The former Perth Glory star scored a terrific individual goal in FC Basel's 4-1 romp over FC Zurich.

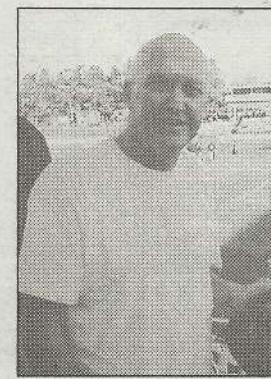
keeper. Chipperfield rounded out Basel's scoring on 87 minutes tapping in a rebound after Varela had hit the post.

Eddie Thompson in good health

By Tim Caimakamis

Former National Coach of the Australian Soccer Team, Eddie Thomson made a surprise visit to an NSL match recently, witnessing a Sydney derby match between Sydney United and Northern Spirit.

Seeming to be in better health, Eddie is recovering well from a recent operation he underwent some months ago, confirming, "Yeah, everything is great".



Eddie Thompson: Has recovered well from his illness.

Mr. Thomson also confided that he hasn't any plans to

rush back into the local Soccer scene.

"I'll spend the next few

months travelling, including

a trip to Japan to watch the

World Cup Finals".

Whilst in Japan, Eddie will approach his many connections in the country and evaluate any football opportunities that may arise.

Eddie, ever the gentleman, went on to admit that if, and when, he does return to Australia, and "If I work in Football, it will probably only be in an administrative role".

Con Constantine: "Australia Should Start A Campaign to stage the 2010 World Cup"

By Mark Stavroulakis

Current Newcastle United Chairman Con Constantine discussed his views on Australia staging the World Cup in 2010. Constantine believes the best way to get into that would be to first join the Asian Football Confederation and also apply to stage the Asian Cup in 2008.

"Australia at the moment is kept away from major soccer events, finance is the problem. Soccer Australia don't have the resources to send representatives overseas to negotiate deals over the World Cup and Asian Cup. Australia did a fantastic job with the Olympics and I believe it could repeat the success by staging the world's biggest sporting event. All Soccer Australia needs is the financial support to campaign to stage it".

The Newcastle United Chairman firmly believes that Australia should bid to stage the 2008 Asian Cup first, in order to "get the points on the board".

Constantine is adamant that facilities, transport infrastructure and venues are not a problem in Australia, and that they are of high standard to hold such events.

"The World Cup could be spread across Australia, with the finals held at Homebush. This event would attract even more international media exposure than the Olympics. Soccer is the world's only truly international sport because it is played in every country in the world. Even in Australia there are more players registered with soccer



Con Constantine: Newcastle United Chairman believes that Australia should join the Asian Football Confederation.

AUSTRALIA GETS FREE LIVE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE



**MT PRITCHARD
FEDERATION
SOCCER CLUB**
A Sub-Club of Mt Pritchard & District Community Club

COACH REQUIRED

Our ambitious and Professional Federation Soccer Club invites applications for the following position for the 2002 Season.

UNDER 15 DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE

Applications for the above position close on Friday **29th March 2002**. All applications must hold a minimum Intermediate License and appropriate Coaching Council Accreditation for all coaching positions.

Enquiries to the Secretary,
Sue Hartas 9673 4939 or 0414 701 489
Or Coach Coordinator,
Dave Higson (02) 4625 1573 or 0412 433 282



PLAYERS WANTED

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE

Under 15s

PENRITH PANTHERS

SOCCER CLUB

PLEASE CONTACT:

PAUL THOMAS

0419 235 183

By Mark Stavroulakis

English fans can rest easy next month as SBS have announced that it will soon begin broadcasting English Premier League matches **LIVE** every Saturday night.

At the moment, FOX Sports is the only station that currently views Live English Premier League matches, while SBS has the one-hour highlight show every Monday nights.

The arrival of this service will commence on Saturday 6th April at 11.55PM(AEST) (09.55PM Perth).

At this stage, the match of the day concurring with SBS' commencement of the Premier League will be the spiteful North London derby between Arsenal and Tottenham.

SBS has once again proved that they are the Soccer channel, as Australians have never witnessed English coverage such as this.

Alongside the Live matches every Saturday night, SBS will boast six hours of dedicated Premiership coverage each week.

Apart from the highlight

show on Monday, a preview show and match of the week on Sunday will also be televised.

No doubt all English punters will be jumping out of their skins with this great news. Next on the agenda for SBS will be the 2002 World Cup.

News on that issue is still up in the air, however, after the latest coup of the Premier League, one would say SBS could be in the box seat in attaining the biggest footballing event happening every four years.



ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

- 4 times a week on SBS

Preview show, every Saturday 4.30 pm
Match of the Week, Every Sunday 4.00 pm
Highlights Program, Every Monday 7.30 pm
LIVE Match of the Week, Every Saturday 11.55 pm



PARRAMATTA EAGLES
SOCCER ACADEMY
COACHING CLINIC



LEARN TO PLAY THE UNITED WAY

SCHOOL HOLIDAY COACHING CLINIC

15 - 19 APRIL 2002

EVERLEY PARK, CHESTER HILL,

MONDAY - THURSDAY

9.00am - 4.00pm

FRIDAY

9.00am - 12.00 noon

TOTAL OF 27 HOURS COACHING

For more information and Registration forms
refer to our website:
www.parraeaglesacademy.com

PO Box 640, CHESTER HILL, NSW 2162.

100% FOOTBALL

MARCONI STALLIONS vs BRISBANE STRIKERS

Saturday 30th March

Kick off 7.00pm

Youth Game kick off 5.00pm

**MAJOR SPONSOR
BRESCIA FURNITURE**

www.marconifc.com or 9823 2222 for more info

Ange Postecoglou Signs New 2-Year Deal With Australia



By Mark Stavroulakis

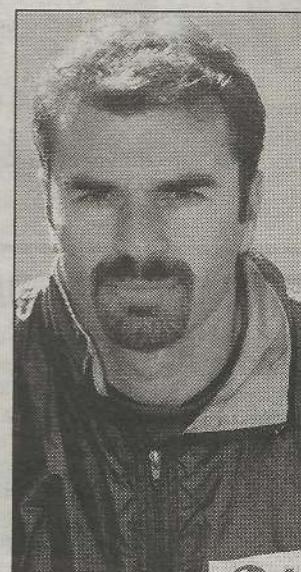
Current Australian Youth coach Ange Postecoglou last week agreed to a new 2-year deal, guiding the next U17 and U20 teams to World Cup glory.

Currently in his second season in charge of all the Australian youth sides, Ange has been to two World Cups, U17's in Trinidad & Tobago and U20's in Argentina, where he has gained good results in establishing Australia as one of the best youth countries in the world.

Postecoglou is in the process of selecting both squads for World Cup qualification, but will at this stage concentrate on the U20's side. "It's pretty quiet in regards to the U17 Joeys side, but

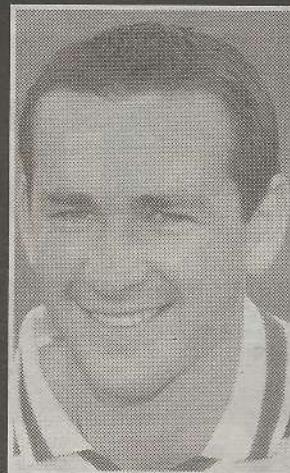
I do have a fair idea on the selection of the squad. I will hold more camps for the side in coming months however the U20's squad is my main priority at this stage. Reason being that the U20 World Cup qualifiers have been moved forward to December, meaning we need to get trainings, tours and quality matches under way. I'm looking to holding the first camp in Canberra straight after the National League season. I'll be inviting a few overseas players but the majority of the squad will be home-based. We have a number of quality youngsters currently playing in the National League which makes my job that much harder. Overall, my main focus is getting the U20's ready for hopefully a good tournament come end of December," said Ange.

There has also been suggestion that Postecoglou will join the current AIS team for their up and coming tour of Italy in mid-April. The squad will take part in the prestigious Gradisca tournament held in Trieste against top World sides. Ange believes these tournaments are great to get a first hand look at the future stars of Australian soccer. "I haven't agreed to anything yet, it's a pos-



Ange Postecoglou: Has signed a new deal as head coach of the U17 and U20 Australian teams.

Livingstone's Lovell endorsed for Scotland's Euro 2004 campaign



Stuart Lovell: Aussie star currently gaining Scottish interest for Euro 2004

Australia international Stuart Lovell has been backed by his Livingstone club to play a part in Scotland's Euro 2004 campaign.

The Livingstone skipper was pushed by club coach John Robertson to be included in Bert Vogts' squad for next week's friendly against France.

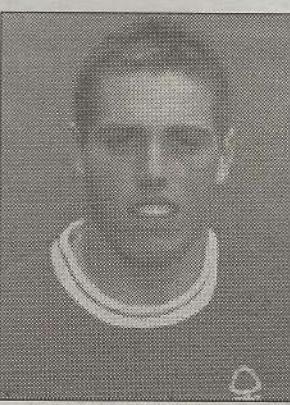
Lovell, who's Mum is from Aberdeen, has three caps with Australia, but is still eligible for

Scotland because the games involved were not official FIFA matches.

Robertson told the Daily Record: "I don't understand why Stuart Lovell is not in the squad because he qualifies through a Scottish mother."

"We are talking about a boy who has direct blood line. But no-one at the SFA has ever written to us or been in touch asking if any of our players have Scottish blood."

Walsall saddling up to bring in two more Aussies



Gareth Edds: A move to Walsall is on the cards.

Walsall is set to expand their Aussie contingent by bringing in the young Australian duo of Gareth Edds and Scott Henshaw.

Following on from the success of recent signing Steve Corica,

the Saddlers have taken on trial Aussie duo Gareth Edds and Scott Henshaw. Australia U20 international Edds is coming out of contract at Nottingham Forest and is seeking a fresh start.

Edds took part in Walsall reserves' win against Stockport County where he played well which certainly caught the eye of Walsall's first team manager.

Henshaw was forced to sit out the game because his international clearance had not arrived in time.

tournaments makes my job a bit easier," said the current Australian youth coach.

Postecoglou's former team, South Melbourne have been the talk of the National League, Ange believes the side has what it takes to go even further than a top six placing. "South Melbourne are defiantly the team to beat. I think they're good enough to finish higher than a top six placing, all's for sure, other clubs wouldn't want to face them at the moment, the teams on fire," said Ange.

One player in particular, has grabbed many peoples attention from the resurgence of South Melbourne, young-gun Massimo Murdocca. A Former Joey from last season, Ange believes his season has rocketed due to the number of experienced players currently at South Melbourne. "Mass is doing very well, he's held his position from when he got his chance at the club but there's been a big difference. At the start of the season, Mass started off a bit sluggish, but the introduction of Trimmers, Boutsi and Panopoulos have helped the youngster develop into a better player," concluded Postecoglou.

Rasic appointment threatens Sterrey's tenure at Marconi



Former Australia World Cup coach Rale Rasic has been named new football chief at Marconi.

A Marconi board meeting made the decision to appoint Rasic in the manager's role, effective immediately and he will be responsible for all football matters, including player contracts and signings, youth development and marketing and promotions.

Rasic, who was in charge of seven NSL clubs during a 302-game coaching career, won the championship with APIA Leichhardt in 1987.

There remains doubt over head coach Lee Sterrey's position with new contract talks still continuing. Rasic's arrival at Marconi will almost certainly spell the end of Sterrey's tenure, who has done a magnificent job with the cash-strapped Stallions

this season.

Sterrey, regarded as one of the best coaches of young talent in Australia, took the Marconi job this season after Newcastle United elected not to renew his contract after three seasons in charge.

Suggestions of Northern Spirit assistant coach John-Paul De Marigny and former Australian coach Raul Blanco have arisen as future coaches for the Stallions job next season.



Rale Rasic: Former Socceroo coach has now become football chief at Marconi which could spell the end of Sterrey's reign at the Stallions.

Petrovski goes with his heart and stays loyal to the green and gold

Viborg striker Sasho Petrovski will remain loyal to Australia, despite a passionate plea to play for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) by manager Gjore Jovanovski.

Jovanovski made the appeal to the Viborg striker last week, phoning Petrovski in a bid to entice him to turn out for the FYROM in this year's Euro 2004 qualifiers - which includes attractive group games against England.

Petrovski, who has dual citizenship, won his only cap for Australia last August against Japan in the inaugural Asia/Oceania championship match.

Only days after playing for the Socceroos, he left his Aussie club, Wollongong Wolves, to sign with



Sasho Petrovski: Will continue his international career with Australia.

Viborg FF in the Danish Super League.

Petrovski told tribalfootball.com: "I was stoked to get the call from Gjore. At first I thought it was one of my mates from Australia pulling my leg, but after a few seconds I realised the guy on the other side of the phone was serious.

"I could not believe that I was being offered the chance to play for in attack FYROM alongside Georgi Hristov. I mean, playing against England at the Millennium stadium in front of 80,000 fans and against players like Rio Ferdinand and David Beckham is mind blowing.

"After speaking with Gjore, I spoke with my wife and then rang my manager in Australia, Lou Sticca to tell him about the offer.

"But after talking to Lou, we started to put things into perspective.

"I am very proud of my Macedonian heritage and perhaps if I had not played that one game against Japan, I probably would have jumped at the opportunity.

"But to be given my international debut by Frank Farina, plus the fact that I had already thrown my hat into the ring to play in the upcoming Oceania Cup in June, I know deep down that I only want to win caps for the Green and Gold.

"I know that while Mark Viduka is available to play for Australia, it means it will be very hard for me to compete for the available places against great players like John Aloisi, Paul Agostino and others.

"But perhaps by making myself available to help Australia play against the smaller nations I can impress Frank Farina enough to win a place as a permanent player.

"But you must admit there's quite a contrast between playing against England with FYROM or against Tonga with Australia.

"But, Australia it is!"

Petrovski has had a great start to his European career with Viborg, having scored six goals and on the way impressing Danish media and fans alike.

MENDEZ COPS FINE

By Daniel Kuziow

Despite reports in all of the major newspapers Sydney United midfielder Gabriel Mendez has vehemently denied spitting at Northern Spirit coach Mick Hickman.

Speaking after the controversial incident he told the Sydney Morning Herald, "I can't believe what I've been reading in the papers."

"I didn't abuse anyone on the bench, and I definitely did-

n't spit at anyone. Nobody else but him [Hickman] is saying there was any spitting. What does that tell you?"



"I ran over there to rub it in. I don't mind admitting that. I got booked for taking my shirt off, that's all. Obviously from a personal point of view, I had something to prove."

"I wasn't happy with the way I was treated at the Spirit, but I've always said I'd rather let my football do the talking. Yesterday was a good day for

me, but there's no way I overstepped the mark."

Yet later on in the week

Mendez was found guilty by an NSL tribunal and fined \$1000.

At the hearing, Mendez claimed that the spitting incident was actually the result of him accidentally losing his chewing gum when he shouted at Hickman, but the tribunal disagreed and found him guilty of bringing the game into disrepute.

football elite

90-120 minute sessions. 12-week programs.

- ▲ intense technical training ▲ football specific athletic development ▲ tactical awareness & football insight ▲ physical & technical assessment
- ▲ periodic progress reports ▲ progressive & specific training methods ▲ personal technical/physical programs as required
- ▲ career advice & counselling ▲ resume building
- ▲ career mentoring ▲ off-field skills & useful hints for trialling ▲ network support system for personal needs ▲ supplementary training materials/aids/resources
- ▲ football elite training shirts

all players that have applications accepted will represent 'football elite' and are subject to upholding the standards and image that is set.

For more information, applications and details go to:

fbelite.com

Or contact:

michael dahdal 0414584770 info@fbelite.com



Gabriel Mendez: Was found guilty of spitting and fined \$1000 for his action.

The Mendez fine is another in the long list of Sydney United's woes. On top of the spitting debacle, the Endensor Park-based club has been slugged \$250 by Soccer Australia for bringing forward the Easter Sunday clash against Newcastle United by 24 hours.

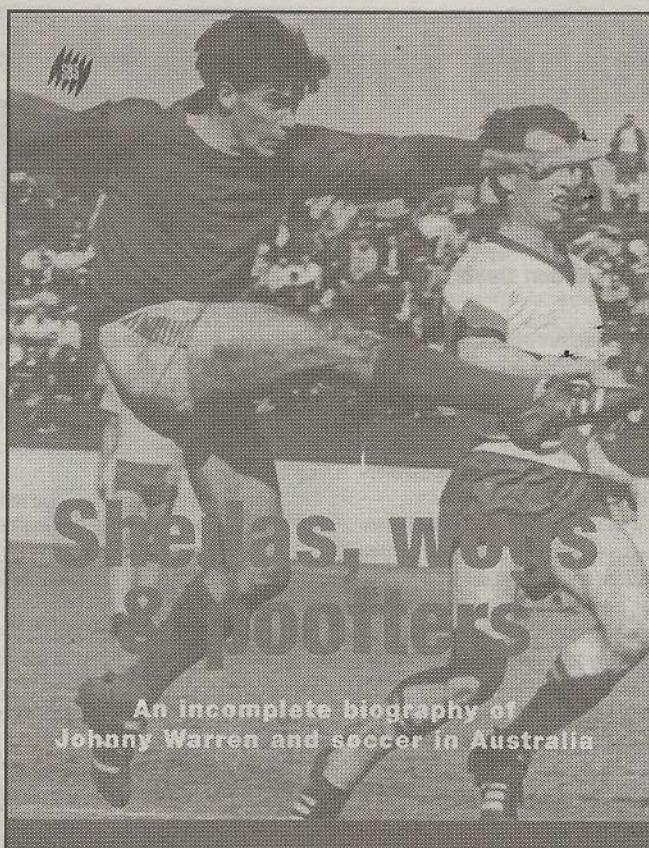
"Sheilas, Wogs & Poofters"

Johnny Warren has witnessed every step of Soccer's great journey in Australia.

Warren represented Australia for 10 years, captaining the National side for three of those years.

Warren is one of the most respected names in the sport.

"Sheilas, Wogs and Poofters" is the story of Johnny Warren's love affair with Soccer and provides a fascinating, entertaining insight into Soccer's social history in this country.



Johnny Warren

with Andy Harper & Josh Whittington

AVAILABLE NOW AT ALL GOOD BOOK RETAILERS

joma™
sport

www.joma-sport.com

Major sponsor of Deportivo La Coruna (Spain), Chievo (Italy), and professional players such as Morientes (Real Madrid)



SPAIN'S PREMIER SOCCER BOOTS & ONE OF EUROPE'S LEADING BRANDS NOW AVAILABLE IN AUSTRALIA.

YOU TOO CAN "KICK ARSENAL", WEARING JOMA BOOTS, IN ANY OF 5 SENSATIONAL MODELS, KANGAROO & CALF LEATHER OR COLOUR MICROFIBRE IN BLUE, SILVER OR BLACK

MADE IN SPAIN, JOMA BOOTS ARE PREMIUM QUALITY AND UNBEATABLE VALUE PRICED BETWEEN \$165 AND \$189.

AVAILABLE NOW ONLY AT THESE SPECIALTY SOCCER OUTLETS

NSW

Soccer City, 544 Princes Hwy Rockdale
Sportscene Corrimbal, 197 Princes Hwy, Corrimbal
Mannings Sportscene Gosford, 172 Mann St, Gosford
Australian Goalkeepers Academy, Contact Jim Fraser
Westfields Sports High School, Hamilton Rd, Fairfield
World of Soccer, Shop 1, 48 McCrae St, Dandenong
Bobby 10 Football World, Shop 3, 900 Hay St, Perth

Ph (02) 9567 5189
Ph (02) 4284 4040
Ph (02) 4325 1617
Ph (02) 0407 728 862
Ph (02) 9604 3333
Ph (03) 9794 5860
Ph (08) 9321 8020

**VIC
WA**

Planet Sport Pty Ltd Exclusive Distributor of JOMA in Australia & NZ
Level 12, Comaltech House, 117 York St Sydney. Ph (02) 9283 2417

Distributors Wanted for SA, QLD, TAS & ACT.

National Soccer League

Brisbane Strikers South Melbourne

By Glenn Davis

Call it a master stroke or just sheer luck but coach John Kosmina won the jackpot with his decision to bring on rookie striker Josh Rose who snatched a late winner against South Melbourne to put the Brisbane Strikers into the national league playoffs.

Rose, who signed with the Strikers three weeks ago following a stand-out season with premiers Wynnum in the local league last year, brought an end to South Melbourne's ten match unbeaten run with the game's only goal in the 89th minute.

Kosmina, who had stated a draw was not an option against Souths, made a brave decision to go on the offensive with three minutes remaining despite Souths dominating in the second half when he substituted defender Adam Webber with Rose.

1
0

Rose had hardly touched the ball before his goal scoring instincts came to the fore as he followed up to tap in from close range after a strike from Michael Baird rebounded off the upright.

Kosmina conceded the Strikers' rode their luck against South Melbourne who missed several scoring chances in the second half.

"We had a bit of luck on our side tonight but we played well enough in the first half to earn some luck," Kosmina said.

"It's been a long time coming to get into the finals but we're finally there now."

Souths coach Eddie Krencevic said the loss was by no means the end of the club's finals hope.

"We did enough to win and the boys are disappointed," he said.

"We played well and have been playing well but by no means are we out of the top six."

Kosmina's summation of the game was spot on with the Strikers unlucky on several occasions not to go in at half time with a clear lead.

The Strikers' goal came against the run of play in the second half with South Melbourne bombing several chances.

Controversial striker Con Boutsianis missed South's best chance heading over the crossbar while Vaughan Coveny, who terrorised the Strikers' defence missed a simple chance with only Jason Kearton to beat midway through the second half.

While Souths showed they would be worthy final contenders should they make the play-offs, it was the Strikers who had the slight

edge in the first 45 minutes.

The match started at a cracking pace with Brazilian Fernando Rech signalling the Strikers' intention with the game's first shot just wide of the upright within two passes off the kickoff.

Souths keeper Michael Petkovic then

denied the Strikers an early lead in the fifth minute with a brilliant diving save off a Kris Trajanovski header, which came off a perfect cross from defender Adam Webber into the box.

South Melbourne also looked dangerous as they weathered the Strikers early onslaught, particularly with their deep runs from midfield, which often caught out the Strikers' attempt at playing the offside trap.

With two matches remaining, the Strikers now appear certainties of making the finals and a chance of repeating their historic grand final win of five years ago.

Apart from Petkovic's fifth minute save, midfielder Steve Panopolous cleared a powerful Rech header off the line four minutes from the interval.

South Melbourne's best first half opportunity also came in the final minutes before the break when a curling cross from near the sideline from Ray Sekulovski almost jagged a goal for the visitors as it curled onto the crossbar with Strikers' keeper Jason Kearton well stranded. Rech, who recently signalled his desire to gain permanent residency to play for the Socceroos if the chance occurred, was easily the most dangerous player for the Strikers while keeper Kearton had an outstanding game to keep a blank scoresheet.



Strikers' defender Jon McKain tackles Souths' captain Paul Trimboli, in Brisbane's vital 1-0 win at Ballymore last Saturday night.

Newcastle United Kingz FC

By Panos Tagaroulias

In conditions that were ideal for players and spectators 9544 people were in attendance for Newcastle United to play host to the Kingz who were attempting to salvage some pride from a poor season.

Ian Crook was using this match as an opportunity to ensure squad members short of recent first team appearances were not short of a gallop in the top grade.

Andrew Roberts and Chris Zoricich were given a night off, while Mark Wilson was given an opportunity for his first start since Australia Day. Michael Prentice was starting his third game while Adam Hughes was given a bench spot. The usual high standard of pre-match entertainment at Energy Australia Stadium was evident.

The first opportunity fell to Joel Griffiths in the 4th minute when Esala Masi challenged Levent Osman, heading down for the blond bomber to shoot wide from the edge of the box.

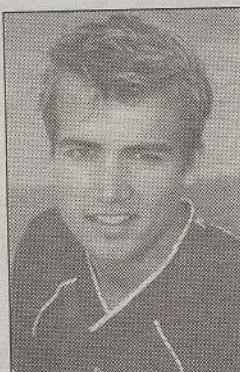
In the 8th minute Jeff Campbell delivered a cross from the left side for Heremai Ngata to head over from the six-yard line. It was clear that Kevin Fallon and his men were not going to sit back and soak up waves of United attacks.

In the 14th minute Esala Masi streaked away from the Kingz defence and cut back a perfect pass to Joel Griffiths. The striker did not get hold of the shot cleanly and the ball struck an unlucky Levent Osman who deflected the ball into his own net. In the 17th minute Joseph Schirripa released Joel Griffiths who beat his man and cut inside the corner of the eighteen-yard box. He attempted a cheeky curling shot that beat Michael Theoklitos and the far post. A minute later, a dubious foul by Robbie Middleby from 30metres, was struck directly at Daniel Beltrame by George Goutzioulis.

Levent Osman nearly added to his own goal by sending a short pass back for his keeper. Joel Griffiths failed to make contact being beaten to the ball by Michael Theoklitos by a matter of centimetres.

In the 53rd minute some excellent lead work from Peter Tsekenis sent three Kingz defenders looking for the ball in a different direction.

A minute later Joel Griffiths laid a ball back



Joel Griffiths: The in-form Newcastle United striker bagged his 10th goal of the season, in his side's 2-0 win over the Kingz last Friday night.

attempting to take the colour out of our game.

In the 36th minute Joel Griffiths rounded the keeper but hit the side netting.

This was followed by another effort that was sent over the bar by Alex Moreira.

In the 89th minute a foul on the edge of the box by Milan Blagojevic on Paul Urlovic led to another free kick that beat the wall but hit a United player on the six-yard line.

The 2-0 score-line was a fair indication of the game with United dominating possession.

The Kingz were kept in the game by some occasional brilliance by Paul Urlovic.

However Matthew Bingley ably led the United defence and another great performance by Peter Tsekenis ensured possession for the home team.

2
0

for Milan Blagojevic to drill into Michael Theoklitos in the Kingz goal.

Ian Crook gave Esala Masi a well-earned rest in the 57th minute. The Fijian international had been troubled with a health issue involving a family member through the week. The entry of Alex Moreira encouraged the Samba section of the Newcastle crowd.

In the 63rd minute, man of the match Matthew Bingley blocked a Paul Urlovic shot from the edge of the box. From the next play the United captain ran the ball at pace for 60 meters and released Joel Griffiths who had run himself off-side.

In the 66th minute Paul Urlovic dragged the ball to the right of Beltrame's goal and turned to send the ball into the United side netting.

In the 69th minute Paul Urlovic put the ball in the back of the net only to have the referee disallow the goal for a foul by Campbell Banks on Daniel Beltrame.

In the 80th minute Alex Moreira struck the Kingz upright from a dead ball that was the result of a foul by Jonathon Perry on Robbie Middleby.

One minute later a Kingz error gifted the ball to the Brazilian maestro, who ran the ball into the box drawing a penalty out Michael Theoklitos who also received a yellow card for his efforts. He duly converted drilling the ball low and to the keepers right.

Referee Matthew Breeze spoiled Alex Moreira's colourful celebrations. He booked the goal scorer for his exuberant celebration in another instance of a match official

attempting to take the colour out of our game.

In the 36th minute Joel Griffiths rounded the keeper but hit the side netting.

This was followed by another effort that was sent over the bar by Alex Moreira.

In the 89th minute a foul on the edge of the box by Milan Blagojevic on Paul Urlovic led to another free kick that beat the wall but hit a United player on the six-yard line.

The 2-0 score-line was a fair indication of the game with United dominating possession.

The Kingz were kept in the game by some occasional brilliance by Paul Urlovic.

However Matthew Bingley ably led the United defence and another great performance by Peter Tsekenis ensured possession for the home team.

Perth Glory Adelaide City Force

By Allan Crisp

This David and Goliath battle deviated slightly from the biblical version, but the City underdog went within a decently aimed slingshot stone of flooring the Glory giant.

Going into this game Perth had only one loss against its name, while the Force had managed just three wins.

The status quo looked certain to prevail when Jamie Harnwell expertly nodded a brilliantly weighted right wing cross from Jamie Dean into the roof of the City net a mere 32 seconds from the kick-off.

But the brashness of youth coupled with the expert experienced leadership of Captain Carl Veart, Aurelio Vidmar and Ante Kovacevic boosted the home side to a stunning revival against the minor round champions.

Nineteen year old Nick Budin grabbed the leveller for City in the 31st minute when Veart steered a long pass to Robbie Sareceno, who flicked a header to Budin in the box.

Budin, in only his second starting game, cleverly turned his opponent before belting the ball past Vince Matassa in the Perth goal to bring his goal tally to two from as many games.

Former Youth Socceroo, Matassa was making his first appearance for Glory since returning from over-

seas last November.

Matassa got his chance because Glory coach Mich d'Avary decided to rest his number one custodian Jason Petkovic.

Former Adelaide City

midfielder Brad Hassell led his new club Glory onto the field as he filled his role captaincy role as part of the clubs leadership rotation system.

As the players moved into their positions, Hassell's popularity with his ex-team mates was evident as they warmly shook his hand.

Friendship was placed on the back burner when Harnwell rocked home Perth's lightning goal.



Jaime Harnwell: The big Glory defender scored in the 1st minute of the game and notched up his fourth goal of the season.

Nick Mrdja, deputising for the suspended Bobby Despotovski, bulleted a stinging drive goalwards, but City goalkeeper Adrian Cagalj made the first of sev-

eral fine saves.

City recovered poise after the early setback with Sareceno heading a cross from Lucas Pantelis on target, an attempt which Matassa was untroubled to stop.

In seasons past, on the Hindmarsh Stadium pitch, Damian Mori found scoring to be a pleasant past time, but this Friday night was to be a barren occasion.

Mori doubtless missed his striking twin Despotovski, while the Force defence was sternly attentive, despite the absence of suspended sweeper Iain Fyfe.

Veart kept things tight at the back in company with

City defence plenty of concern as he hustled and hustled his way through an energetic 90 minutes.

Mori went close with a 25th minute header which sailed over the crossbar and weaved his way past Rees and Karlovic in the 41st minute only to have his shot smothered by Cagalj.

Bravery and judgement were major assets of the Force goalkeeper when he dived to deny Hassell and later smothered a close range screamer from Horsley.

The keen training atmosphere generated by experience trio, Vidmar, Veart and Kovacevic during the week had flowed onto the match track to earn the Force a face saving point.

City president/manager/coach/selectors Bob D'ottavi was justifiably proud of his players and the final score that belied the respective positions of the teams.

"The credit has to go to Zoran (Matic)," D'ottavi said. "You can't coach a team-in just one week. This is Zoran's team and he should be given credit. I know he will be happy with this result."

Skipper Veart also was chuffed with the result saying, "The team spirit has been excellent the past few weeks." "We know we have let ourselves down this year and we have got something to prove in the last three games."

Glory assistant coach Alan Vest rated his team, thus, "It was a very poor performance, it was our worst performance of the season, but full credit to Adelaide City, they worked very hard, they passed the ball better than we did, they really lifted their game."

National Soccer League

Olympic Sharks Marconi Stallions

By Joe Russo

If ever there was a game of two halves, to borrow an old cliché, this was it. Toyota Park in Cronulla witnessed a great metamorphosis in the second half.

Olympic Sharks who dominated in the first half were a sixes and sevens in the second, while Marconi went in the opposite direction.

Full credit must go to Royce Brownlie who scored two second half goals. However, it was not so much the goals, or even the fact that they enabled Marconi to draw the game that was the talking point in the press box during the game.

Brownlie's eighth goal in three weeks meant that he had also scored all of Marconi's last eight goals. This is a new NSL record because it overtakes the seven consecutive goals scored by Ivan Kelic in 1993/94 for Olympic Sharks.

Sitting high in the stands at Cronulla

2
2

was Marconi's newly appointed Technical Director for next season, 1974 Socceroo coach, Rale Rasic.

It was like a reunion of ex Socceroo coaches at the game; joining Rasic, and all four sitting together, were Eddie Thomson, Les Scheinflug and Raul Blanco.

However, it was the modern day coaches of both sides that would have been kicking themselves after the game. Olympic's Gary Phillips and Marconi's Lee Sterrey must both have been terribly disappointed, but for very different reasons.

For Olympic the draw just about ends their aspirations of second place. Four points adrift of Newcastle United and only two rounds to go.

For the Stallions it is just about the end of season. Barring a miracle, or a belief in Santa Claus, there is virtually no possible way they can make the Top Six. Mathematically it is not impossible but they require far too many other results,

plus their own ones, to go their way. For Sterrey, who with a shoestring budget, has done a commendable job, it may not be enough to save his position as coach for next year.

Marconi is a club that demands success and, even in the circumstances of very limited finances, they still expect it. Unfortunately for Sterrey missing out on the Top Six will be deemed a failure.

Olympic can thank referee Con Diomis for what can at best be described as 'a hometown decision'. The opening goal came in the 23rd minute thanks to a very dubious penalty.

Angelo Costanzo was judged to have pushed Dylan MacAllister in an off-the-ball incident waiting for a Lindsay Wilson cross.

MacAllister didn't fall but Diomis had no doubt it was a penalty.

The irony of it all was that Diomis is often criticised by some other clubs as being a pro-Marconi referee.

MacAllister made no mistake from the penalty spot.

In the 33rd minute Marconi's Michael Turnbull, at full stretch, could only parry MacAllister's shot and Ante Juric was on hand to finish off and score Olympic's second goal.

However, the second half was a totally different game. Marconi dominated and Olympic fell totally apart. It would be worrying to their coach Phillips with the Top Six just around the corner.

Brownlie scored in the 58th minute after receiving the ball from John Maisano. He placed it beautifully in the top right hand corner of the net.

In the 78th Brownlie was on hand again to equalise. Raphael Bove, a former Olympic player, set him up and he beat a defender and slotted the ball home past Clint Bolton. It was 2-2 and the draw was never going to satisfy either team.

Right at the end, in the 91st minute, a Tom Pondeljak volley only ended up centimetres past the Marconi goal. It would have been a travesty of justice had it gone in and gave Olympic the victory as a draw was certainly the fairest result.



Sharks young gun Dylan Macallister tussles with Stallions defender Raphael Bove in last Sunday's derby match that ended two-all.

Photo courtesy of Con Poulos

Melbourne Knights Wollongong Wolves

By Bert van Bedaf

Top-six side Melbourne Knights battled their way past back-to-back title-holders Wollongong Wolves in a 4-2 tussle at Knights stadium last Sunday night, while the lights went out on Wollongong's finals aspirations.

"If you look at it, we gave them three goals. It's unfortunate, but that's the way the game goes," Wolves coach Ron Corry said.

"We're out of it now. We had to win the (last three games). If we'd won the three (last) games we would have made it."

"But we'll still be out to win the game against South Melbourne (next Thursday). We've got two games to go (last away to Northern Spirit) and we'll try and finish with two wins," he said.

It wasn't as if the Wolves were without chances. They looked dangerous at times and came back twice to level against a Knights defence, with captain-coach Andrew Marth as stopper, that appeared vulnerable.

In the end outstanding strikes by Joel Porter, Toto Da Costa, Steve Horvat and substitute Xhezair Sulemani made the difference after Stuart Young and Greg Sharland had given the Wolves some hope with two equalisers.

Marth conceded that the Wolves goals had been soft, but he praised his side for its character replying twice to regain the lead.

"We've been in so many situations where we've given away a goal and got back within minutes. It showed a lot of character and heart to come back so quickly," Marth said.

In fifth place, the Knights only need a draw (at home against Northern Spirit on Saturday night) to make sure of a finals place. Two wins could lift them into third spot.

Since second place is out of the question, Marth is only looking forward to a successful finals campaign regardless who the Knights play.

"I doesn't matter where we finish

goal. But he pushed the ball into the side-net as he followed through.

Porter already announced his intentions after 16 minutes with a powerful shot from an angle. But Anastasiadis had it closed down and saved confidently.

The Wolves tried to ruffle the Knights with physical tactics and promptly copped cautions for it. Referee Perry Mur showed yellow to George Souris, Alex Castro and Dino Mennillo. Souris and Mennillo continued to live dangerously, but a full pack of Wolves finished the first half with the Knights staying a goal in front.

The Wolves equalised on 52 minutes after a defensive mistake by Rody Vargas, who allowed the ball to run towards goal in an attempt to play it back on the 'keeper.

But Sekulovski robbed him off the ball only to be denied by John who cleared. Yet, the ball fell for Young who lobbed it into an empty net.

Wollongong's equaliser lasted no longer than two minutes. Ivo De Jesus initiated the move from the left with a cross into the box that crashed through a bunch of players across the face of goal. It landed at an unmarked Da Costa who smashed a half-volley into the far corner to put the Knights a goal up for a second time.

Castro had an opportunity from close range but was denied by John after 58 minutes. Sulemani hit the crossbar in the 77th minute, before the game exploded with a hat trick of goals.

The Knights defence stood napping again when it only half-cleared a corner, leaving substitute Sharland an easy shot on goal for Wollongong's second equaliser.

Yet, again, the Knights hit back quickly. On 84 minutes, Horvat chipped Anastasiadis to give the home team the lead for the third time.

Then Xhezair sealed the game in the 86th minute with another chip to give the Knights what finished as a comfortable 4-2 victory to all but cement their finals place.

4
2



Aerial battle between Knights Captain Andrew Marth and Wolves striker Stuart Young.

Parramatta Power Sydney United

By Stuart Jones

Parramatta Power marched into the top six with a 2-0 victory over local rivals Sydney United at Parramatta Stadium on Saturday night.

Damien Brown and teenage star Brett Holman put the ball in the back of the net for Power in a match totally dominated by the home team.

The first half of the match was definitely the best. In fact had everyone

gone home at the half time break, then nothing would have been missed. Parramatta started well with Matthew Langdon's early effort deflected away by the defence. It should have been a warning to United. For their part they looked flat and Brendan Santalab could only toe-poke a through ball straight to Liam Reddy in the Parramatta goal, for what was to be United's best effort of the opening period.

The opening 15 minutes had seen good development work from Parramatta but no final shot. Then on the 17th minute Langdon found himself free on the far post and the cross from the left found him. His shot however was weak and straight to Knezevic in the United goal. Two minutes later it was Langdon providing the cross from the left. Damien Brown in the midst of defenders got up the highest and headed over the advancing United goal keeper and into the back of the net to put the Power one up.

Ahmad Elrich then started making an impact although most of his great runs were ruined by his want to take shots rather than to lay it off to team mates. On the half-hour Steve Eagleton played a couple of great balls into the center but Langdon missed the opportunities. Elrich then also spurned a good chance after running into traffic in the area and thoughts of the local fans turned to the hope Power did not live to regret these wasted opportunities. This looked a good warning as the period 30-40 minutes into the game marked a good spell for United. They still could not turn possession into opportunities but they laid off some great passing pas-

2
0

Parramatta's defence but his low shot was saved well by Liam Reddy. Substitute Goran Talevski had an effort well saved by Reddy in the final minute and they were about all of the highlights.

In fact the ball did hit the back of the net once in the half and what proceeded it did stir up the local fans (well those that were there in the crowd of 2991 — another disappointing figure for the NSL this season). Daniel Watkins, on as substitute at half time as a defender, took out Steve Eagleton late just outside the area and the ball ballooned to a Parramatta player free on the left.

However referee Eddie Lennie pulled it up and failed to play the advantage. Then Peter Bennett fired the ball home after it was laid off to him only to see it recalled as Lennie had not blown time on (Bennett's second shot was deflected away of the defensive wall).

At 2-0 at fulltime failed to show the true dominance of the Power. 13-0 in corners, 24-6 in total attempts on or off target, 41 crosses to 7 perhaps more indicated the play. However United, for what they could play on the pitch (the likes of Ararate and Bilokapic were suspended) did not play all that badly and that showed in the fact the score line was not higher. Afterwards Branko Culina was straightforward about the result.

"Parramatta were the better side there is no one who could say otherwise. We are still competitive but just to put a team out on the park at the moment is a challenge. Parramatta played well and had more to play for than we did. We struggled up front but over the season we have lost the likes of Arambasic, Angelluci, Marusic and Milicic don't forget. Tonight we let two soft goals in and that cost us a point."

Stuart Munro spoke of the team's confidence, "We have self belief from last week. The players have confirmed to themselves that they are good players and it is reflected in our play. We just needed that boost which came from last week's result. I expect 100% commitment from each player and it is what we got tonight. It was a great result."

Parramatta are in the six by a point however they now watch from the sidelines next week as they have the bye and will be looking for Spirit and South Melbourne to slip up once more. Then in the final week they take on the Knights at home.



Damien Brown: Parramatta Power midfielder scored his first goal in his side's two-nil win over neighbours Sydney United last Saturday night.

PACIFIC UMBRO SOCCER CAMPS KICK OFF AGAIN

AUSTRALIA's largest, (let alone best known), Soccer clinics, 'THE UMBRO PACIFIC SOCCER CAMPS' kick-off once again during the coming April School holidays.

Established now for almost 20 years, the Umbro Pacific Soccer Camps have been strategically set up at no less than 14 geographically convenient centres stretching right across the region of Sydney.

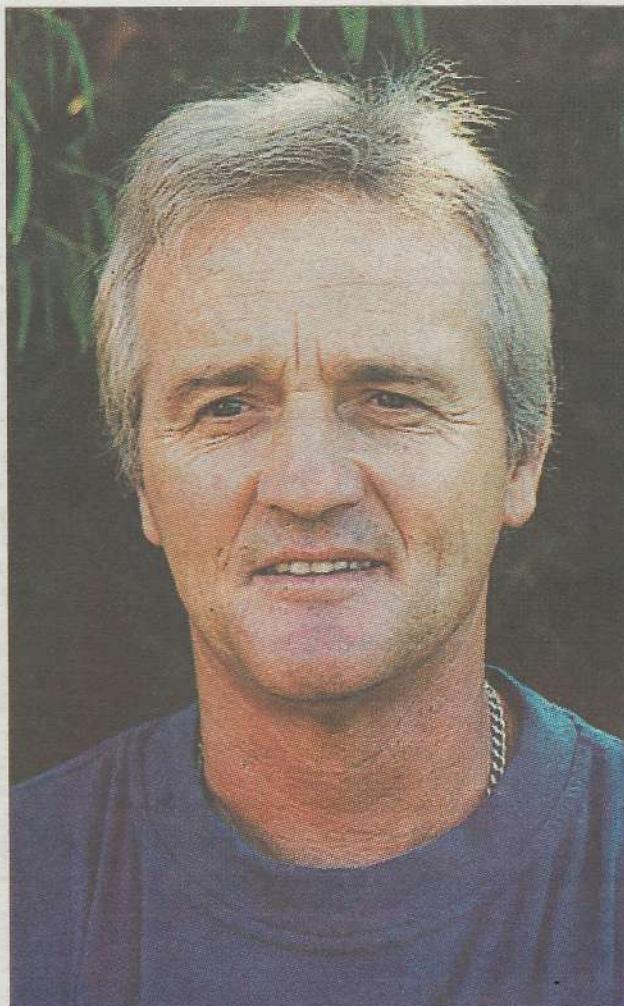
Camps have been set up at Canterbury, Caringbah, Castle Hill, Eastwood, Emu Plains, Frenchs Forest, Hunters Hill, Hurstville, Kirrawee, Mona Vale, Pennant Hills, Quakers Hill, St Clair as well as at St Ives.

Every centre has Indoor facilities in case of wet weather.

These invaluable Soccer Camps over the years have been well designed and fine-tuned by Technical Director, Mr Richard Alagich.

The Camps which specifically cater for boys and girls from the ages of 6 to 14 years, extend 20 hours of technical as well as tactical coaching and each enrolled student will receive a Camp T-Shirt plus free drinks.

Mr Alagich stated to ABSW:



RICHARD ALAGICH: The Camps' Technical Director.

"We are very proud of our Soccer Camps and the great reputation that we have built up over the years that we have been going."

"Believe me it has been very hard work. However we have constantly strived to be able to give quality and value to all the children that come to our popular Soccer Camps."

The very well experienced Fred Wall, the Camps' Manager and leading Youth Goalkeeping coach, will be based at the St Ives Soccer Camp.

Special discounts are extended to Families, Groups or Clubs registrations.

The four hour daily Camps start on Monday April 15 and go through till Friday April 19th.

Closing date for registrations to attend the April School holiday Soccer Camps is 10th April 2002.

All enrolments must be completed by this date to ensure your child's acceptance into one of the 14 Soccer Camps.

For further information, booking enquiries and registrations, please make contact by phoning the Pacific Umbro Soccer Camp offices on 02-9977 2992 or by Faxing to 02-9977 0376.

Don't leave it too late.



ANDY HARPER: World Cup Commentator and part of the Umbro Pacific Soccer Camps.



SPONSORS OF
CHAMPIONS
IS PROUD TO
PRESENT THE

PACIFIC UMBRO SOCCER CAMP



APRIL
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
1ST WEEK



5 DAYS
9.00 am to 1.00 pm



14 LOCATIONS
SYDNEY WIDE

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm
APRIL 15 - 19, 2002



FOR
BOYS
GIRLS
AGED
6-14 YRS



Richard Alagich
Camp Director

CAMP BOOKING AND ENQUIRIES
Ph: 9977 2992 Fax: 9977 0376
email@pacificsoccer.com.au

OR visit our website:

www.pacificsoccer.com.au

CAMP LOCATIONS

CANTERBURY

— Canterbury Boys High School Holden Street, Canterbury

CARINGBAH

— Endeavour High School The Boulevarde, Caringbah

CASTLE HILL

— Castle Hill High School Castle Street, Castle Hill

EASTWOOD

— Epping Boys High School Vimiera Road, Eastwood

EMU PLAINS

— Nepean High School Great Western Hwy, Emu Plains

FRENCHS FOREST

— The Forest High School Frenchs Forest Rd, Frenchs Forest

HUNTERS HILL

— Hunters Hill High School Reiby Road, Hunters Hill

HURSTVILLE

— Hurstville Boys High School Kenwyn Street, Hurstville

KIRRRAWEE

— Kirrawee High School Hunter Street, Kirrawee

MONA VALE

— Kitchener Park Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale

PENNANTS HILLS

— Pennant Hills High School Laurence Street, Pennant Hills

QUAKERS HILL

— Quakers Hill High School Lalor Road, Quakers Hill

ST CLAIR

— St Clair High School Endeavour Avenue, St Clair

ST IVES

— St Ives High School Yarrabung Road, St Ives

PACIFIC — UMBRO SOCCER CAMP FEES

with SPECIAL DISCOUNTS for your CLUB or FAMILY
Get a group booking together and take advantage of these fantastic discounts

GROUP BOOKING

1 player \$145
2-5 players \$140 (ea)
6 or more players \$135 (ea)

FAMILY BOOKING

1 child \$145
2 children \$140 (ea)
3 or more children \$135 (ea)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

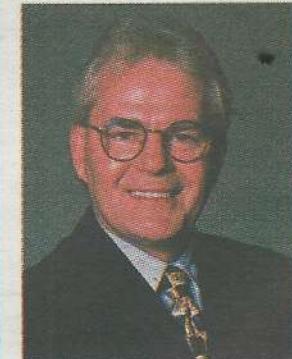
- 20 hours of technical tactical coaching
- Camp T Shirt
- Free Drinks

(Note: Group bookings may be made by phone, fax or mail. The discount applied depends on the final number of Application Forms received from the group.)

ALL LOCATIONS HAVE INDOOR FACILITIES
IN THE EVENT OF WET WEATHER

Australia's Mr Soccer Les Murray

"... I thoroughly recommend the Pacific Umbro Soccer Camp to you..."



LEGENDARY AUSTRALIAN WORLD CUP COACH RALE RASIC

"... The Professional manner in which the camps are conducted greatly impressed me. I highly recommend the Pacific Umbro Soccer Camp to you..."



Australia's leading Youth Goalkeeper Coach



2002 World Cup Commentator



ANDY HARPER

Former NSL Star
"...I am pleased to be part of the Camp Program..."

DAVID MITCHELL: Life After Parramatta Power



By Stuart Jones

David Mitchell is not a man to stand back and take it easy. Despite everything that has occurred to him over the last few months he is already back in the swing of things and preparing for life after Parramatta Power at season's end. He is to be the chief scout in Asia and Australia for Dutch club Feyenoord. Mitch takes up the story.

"It is a newly created job, a singular role, as scout to Australia and Asia for Feyenoord. I will be mainly looking at players in Australia, Korea, Japan and China. I have a lot of contacts in Australian and Asian football and I can utilize them in this new role. The job itself will be continually developing so I am looking forward to the challenges it will present."

"The quality of player in Australia and Asia has made the big European clubs take notice in the last few years. When I first went overseas no one took Australian players seriously but our success in recent years has clubs falling all over each other to get players from here. It will be nice to work for a big club like Feyenoord as people and clubs in Asia will take any offer seriously. It is all up front, there is no ducking and diving unlike so much of football. I will recommend a player and then if they ask me to I will contact the club domestically and ask to approach the player. I will then contact the player's agent and player on behalf of the Dutch club and work out whether the player will trial here or over there. It then goes into the hands of the technical director at Feyenoord who will make a decision on the player."

"The club wants me to look all over for talent. They may ask me to pin point a position they are lacking in, either in the senior or one of the more junior sides at the club. Or else they will ask me to pick up some of the younger players around this part of the world. Some players are ready to go at a younger age. Personally I think the recent

changes in FIFA laws on junior transfers are a good thing. FIFA are trying to protect young players from moving too early based on the false expectation of a rosy football future overseas. They can only go if the education being provided in the country of destination is better than the one they get at home. Feyenoord has one of the best schooling systems (outside of football) in the world so there is no problem there."

"If you are good enough you will make it. Each person has their own path to football success. I advised Feyenoord to keep their eyes on Brett Emerton and he stayed here for a while and matured and look at the wonders he has done this season. Steve Laybutt was a good player but when he went to the club he was affected by injury. It comes down to skill, chance and opportunity. In the long run if you are good enough you will make it but some must be realistic about whether they are good enough for overseas. It is not just about playing skill over there, it is about



David Mitchell: Will become Feyenoord's Chief Scout in Asia and Australia.

mental toughness and whether you have the strength to overcome the inevitable homesickness. When I first started the hardest obstacle was taking on those who thought no good soccer players could come from Australia, but it is no longer an issue."

"Feyenoord is a huge club and I am proud to be working for them once more. I played there

for two seasons and we came second and third. At the time PSV were champions of Europe so it was not a bad effort. I played with both current assistant coaches and the club's Chairman and Secretary are the same as when I was wearing the first team strip. So it is like a homecoming and it is nice to know they trust my judgement. It will be nice to have twelve months off coaching as the last three years have worn me down. I also have other ongoing projects in and outside of football on the boil so it should be exciting times ahead for me."

There was some criticism in the media of his recent trip overseas but ABSW asked the man directly the truth behind the trip. "I went overseas to consolidate a few of the deals for my life after this season. I never hid from the fact I was going. When Dennis Fitzgerald and I came to a mutual agreement about seeing out the rest of the season I asked if I could take some time in the near future to go overseas and consolidate my future. He was happy to let me as we had two experienced coaches at the club who could fill the void. He said he did not want to stand in the way of me furthering my career into the future. Dennis and I get along very well and there are no problems between us. I am thankful he let me go overseas but of course I was disappointed we lost our games whilst I was not in Australia."

Mitchell has never been one to shy away from the difficult issues and he did not shy away again. On his record at Power; "It was exciting to start a new club from scratch, I certainly learnt a lot. People have pointed to the money we have spent but they fail to see the bigger picture. Our budget has been good, but we threw all our figures together — our so called "player budget" included areas like marketing and set up costs. In the first year we came in the likes of Perth, Carlton, Marconi, South Melbourne, Northern Spirit and Sydney Olympic had bigger player budgets than us. If we have not succeeded then it must be remembered it took Perth Glory three years to make the play offs. If it had not been for the unsettling events at the club over the last few months this season we would be in a better position on the table I am sure, and even now we are not out of the finals race."

One reason they are still in the hunt was the unresolved situation with South Melbourne playing Con Boutsianis against the Kingz and Mitchell has not avoided tackling publicly that issue recently. "All the clubs in the top six race are looking at the South Melbourne situation I am

sure, we certainly are. At first I wondered what South Melbourne were doing playing Con, I am sure most of the other clubs in the league would not have played him in that situation."

Most clubs would stand by agreements made and although I have heard some people say to the contrary recently it can be written into contracts these days (players not playing against certain clubs that is), it happens in European football all the time. Everyone I have spoken to say the situation is black and white and it is ludicrous. Soccer Australia has asked the two clubs to sort it out between themselves. Coaches and players get pulled up for it quite often, but who is putting those in charge of the league up in front of the judiciary for bringing the game into disrepute when such decisions are handed down?"

As for those who are critical of his coaching record; "I think I have done well. I did okay at Olympic and then took Sydney United to third before winning the league the season after (home and away) in circumstances that were very difficult to say the least. Parramatta was exciting to start up but there have been a lot of problems along the way that many people would not see."

I have enjoyed my time at the club and as Football Manager I have had two great friends in Laurie (McKinna) and Stuart (Munro) as Power coaches alongside me. I have no criticism of Dennis Fitzgerald, in fact my relationship with Dennis is as strong as ever. He and I had a meeting and we agreed it was time for the club to go in a new direction after me being there for three years. I was looking for a new challenge and we came to a most amicable agreement about the rest of the season. Now I want to see the side finish in the top six to cap off my time at the club in a great way."

As for the future, will he coach again? "I am taking twelve months off as a complete break from coaching. After that we will see what develops. Hopefully the season after next will see a restructured Australian league. Maybe that will include some new clubs and I would be hoping my experiences establishing Power would stand me in good stead in helping establish a further new club. I have learnt a lot about what to and not to do in starting from scratch, a lot of things I would do differently second time around. One thing for example is that you need football people involved all the way along, they know how to run a football club. Of course there are always opportunities in Asia and beyond for me as well so I am looking forward to the change."

From a personal view I have always found David Mitchell to be a true gentleman. I actually saw him first play in the early 1990s for a Glenn Hoddle player — managed Swindon team. Of course Mitchell had already made a name for himself at Rangers and before that in Australia. He played football with distinction right throughout the world and has taken on difficult coaching assignments with success (no one can under rate his efforts at taking Sydney United to the top in his second season in charge).

He may not be so popular at Edensor Park today but in those two seasons as coach there he was well respected for his abilities. He took a load of players from the state league and veterans many had written off to the Grand Final.



The Good Old days, Mitchell shown here in his Feyenoord outfit.

The Parramatta years have been difficult for him thanks to issues he would not have dreamed of having when he first took on the role.

He was a true pioneer of the current breed of Aussies Abroad. He was one of the first (if not the first) Australians to score in European trophy competition and enjoyed much success in Europe and in Malaysia where still today he is treated with much adulation. He has kept his feet on the ground and still loves the game. One can only hope the new phase of his career, back at Feyenoord, will be successful (well kind of successful — we don't want all our best players playing in Europe Mitch!).

First Team Football Put On Hold for Mark Byrnes



By Mark Stavroulakis

Young Socceroo Mark Byrnes, currently on loan from Parramatta Power to Italian Serie B side Vicenza, injured his knee last week at training which has put back his intended debut for the first team.

Having so far spent five months in Italy, Byrnes impressed the Vicenza coaching staff whilst in the Primavera side. The Italian officials saw a lot of promise in the 20-year-old, who promoted him to the first grade squad.

The youngster is currently on a 8-month trial from the Power, but looks set to claim a first grade contract through his recent form at club training's and matches played in the reserve team.

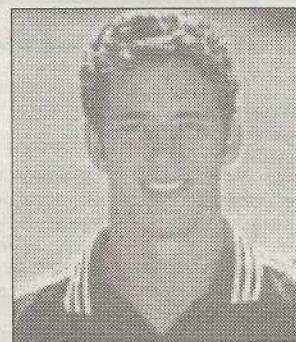
No doubt a huge set back for the Australian star, as a first grade game was imminent. The no nonsense defender sought a second opinion in Milan on the

injury and was cleared of a knee operation much to the relief of the player.

Byrnes will be out for at least 3 weeks, meaning Byrnes will probably miss the end of the Serie B season.

News of this won't be good for Australian U20's coach Ange Postecoglou, who in coming weeks will set up an U20's camp for the up and coming World Cup qualifiers in December.

Byrnes has represented Australia at U17 and U20 level, hopefully with a quick recovery, 'Byrnsey' will be back to his feet representing his country and getting that valuable overseas contract.



Mark Byrnes: Confident of gaining a permanent contract in Italy.

FYFE FLOURISHES IN FIRST FULL SEASON

By Allan Crisp

When Iain Fyfe came off the Adelaide City bench in the final three games of last season, many supporters thought the defender looked somewhat familiar.

In his debut match, the powerfully built player fitted perfectly into the left wing back spot and looked the part as he confidently stroked accurate passes to all points of the pitch.

In later games Fyfe proved his versatility as he, in turn, occupied all of the defensive positions with equal aplomb.

This season the fans reinforced the opinion they formed when they first clapped eyes on Fyfe the player he resembles is former Adelaide City great Alex Tobin.

High praise indeed, but the form displayed by Fyfe this campaign indicates he has the ability and temperament to rise to great heights.

And, its no wonder that Fyfe has the cool, calm demeanour of Tobin, because the youngster has been an avid admirer of the record breaking former Adelaide City and Socceroo captain since he first started playing.

"I try to emulate great defenders like Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic because their technique is brilliant," Fyfe said.

Up until Fridays home game against Perth Glory at Hindmarsh Stadium, Fyfe and Force vice captain Ante Kovacevic were the only City players to have played all 21 NSL games.

But Fyfe, who turns 20 on April 3, missed that fixture through suspension after being booked for the fourth time this season in the away clash with Marconi.

Despite City's abysmal away record and the trials and tribulations associated

with the constantly swinging player exit gate, Fyfe has enjoyed his first full season with the club.

His passion for the game stems from the influence of his Scottish-born father John Fyfe, a former player with English club Rushden and Diamonds and New Zealand club Gisborne City.

John Fyfe continued his outstanding career with South Australian first division club, Enfield Victoria, the northern areas club where David Mitchell made his senior debut before signing for Adelaide City.

In later games Fyfe proved his versatility as he, in turn, occupied all of the defensive positions with equal aplomb.

This season the fans reinforced the opinion they formed when they first clapped eyes on Fyfe the player he resembles is former Adelaide City great Alex Tobin.

High praise indeed, but the form displayed by Fyfe this campaign indicates he has the ability and temperament to rise to great heights.

And, its no wonder that Fyfe has the cool, calm demeanour of Tobin, because the youngster has been an avid admirer of the record breaking former Adelaide City and Socceroo captain since he first started playing.

"I try to emulate great defenders like Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic because their technique is brilliant," Fyfe said.

Up until Fridays home game against Perth Glory at Hindmarsh Stadium, Fyfe and Force vice captain Ante Kovacevic were the only City players to have played all 21 NSL games.

But Fyfe, who turns 20 on April 3, missed that fixture through suspension after being booked for the fourth time this season in the away clash with Marconi.

Despite City's abysmal away record and the trials and tribulations associated

with the constant player exit gate, Fyfe has enjoyed his first full season with the club.

That was two years ago against Brazil when history relates that Australia lost the final 8-7 on penalties.

With the score level on 7-7, Fyfe was called on to take the crucial spot-kick, but his attempt was pushed onto the post.

Should he be successful, Fyfe will have one up on his hero, because that award is one that has eluded Alex Tobin.

Fyfe is among the leaders in the voting for the prize as the season draws to a close.

He came in at the eleventh hour

because Noel Whelan has been in bed for two days. "We gave Noel every chance and gave him a fitness test this morning but we felt he was not quite right.

Luke came in and could have been

the hero."

Wilshire started off his career at the NSW Institute of Sport before moving to the AIS, where it was there,

many people realised the potential this youngster had.

Boro's Wilkshire earns praise from coach McClaren



Australian youngster Luke Wilshire has received glowing praise from Middlesbrough manager Steve McClaren in the wake of his outstanding performance against Liverpool.

The 20-year-old midfielder excelled during his home debut against Liverpool at the weekend, despite Boro going down 2-1.

In a dramatic turn of events, Wilshire was only drafted into the starting eleven after regular frontman Noel Whelan failed a last minute fitness test at the Riverside Stadium.

After making his full debut against Southampton last weekend, Wilshire showed no signs of nerves and was credited as taking half of his team's efforts on goal against Liverpool.

He is yet to open his account for the first team yet has scored on five times for the reserve team this season.

Speaking on the teams most recent performance Boro coach Steve McClaren made special mention of the young Aussie, McClaren told the Middlesbrough website, "I thought Luke had a tremendous game".

"He came in at the eleventh hour because Noel Whelan has been in bed for two days. "We gave Noel every chance and gave him a fitness test this morning but we felt he was not quite right.

Luke came in and could have been

the hero."

Wilshire started off his career at the NSW Institute of Sport before moving to the AIS, where it was there, many people realised the potential this youngster had.

Letters to the Editor

DISGRACEFUL MENDEZ

Dear Sir,

I was at the Sydney United-Northern Spirit match that ended in a 1-1 draw and recently read in your newspaper a brief mention of the incident surrounding Gabriel Mendez and Ian Crook.

I must say that the match was quite a spiteful one with many players involved with one club or the other, and the added derby atmosphere created a rather tense atmosphere. However the allegations of Mendez spitting in the direction of the Northern Spirit I find absolutely disgusting and totally abhorrent.

Spitting in any environment and any situation is generally uncalled for and when it is a deliberate act aimed at another individual is totally despicable. A sporting contest is played in good spirit and this event has certainly soured the match and tarnished the reputation of the particular player.

It was only a couple of years that Gabriel Mendez was plying his trade in Europe and a regular in the Socceroos side. Could it be that incidents like those seen on Sunday were the reason for the

gradual decline of his career?

The journalists in the grandstand reported this incident in all the major newspapers the following day. However the most important person who forgot to report this was the referee.



Gabriel Mendez: Was alleged to have spat at the Northern Spirit bench.

He did book Mendez for the verbal blast he gave to Hickman, yet either failed to see or neglected mentioning it in his match report.

Spitting in a game should not be tolerated and Northern Spirit is fully justified in calling for an inquiry into the event and the referee's failure to include it in a report.

My final words are that such events that bring the game into disrepute should be outlawed and more closely monitored. More so, those people who partake in events such as deliberately spitting at another person should be reprimanded in the sternest way possible.

W. Mara
Pymble NSW

Editor's Note: It is not known whether or not Gabriel Mendez did display this action against the Spirit as the player himself has come out and stated he didn't do such a thing. Mendez had a point to prove playing against his former club, emotions were high on the day. However, in regards to spitting, no doubt this is something that is not needed in the game of Soccer, and if done, the player should be penalised for such a heinous act.

SOUTH MELBOURNE ARE ON FIRE



Dear Sir,

With only a handful of matches go until the NSL semi-finals, one surely must be on the lookout for the South Melbourne side who have now gone 10 games in a row without defeat. Their last victory over the Olympic Sharks however to date was the most convincing.

The 3-0 defeat of the Sharks was a thorough victory for the home side against a team that has been so sure at the back for the vast majority of the season.

To concede three goals in this match and not get on the scoreboard themselves is an indication of the dominance of the South Melbourne team.

After such a poor start to the season it is very healthy for the competition to have a side in such good form leading up to the final series and one must only wonder how South would be placed now if their

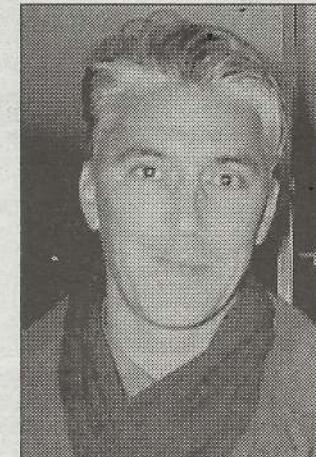
poor start to the season had been avoided.

I think it is more than coincidence that South Melbourne began their 10 match streak after the club brought back two prodigal sons. In particular Con Boutsianis has featured in every one of the ten matches and his injection into the team has injected some much needed attacking flair into the side.

It is obvious that now South Melbourne have the perfect balance in Eddie Krncevic as their coach and a good mix of young and old in their playing squad. Good luck to South in the remaining games of the season and to the other top five teams, watch out.

M.Muratore
Fitzroy, VIC

Editor's Note: South Melbourne have really been the in-form side these past months and have achieved excellent results. The poor start to the season has quickly been forgotten with top performances by the squad who at this stage look like the



Eddie Krncevic: South Melbourne coach guiding his side to the top six.

'dark horses' of the top six. Blending in their youthful players with the experienced ones have worked wonders for the club, and who knows, maybe a National League championship awaits yet again for the Blue army.

COMMENTS ON

Johnny Warren's Book

Dear Sir,

I have only read the first section dealing with the early years of that book written by JW the former Socceroo with a fixation on all things Brazilian Soccer.

The early part once again highlights the incredible incompetence of so many Soccer officials then just life now. A few examples.

It is known that the present sight of the giant St George Leagues Club at Kogarah was previously the headquarters of the St George Soccer Association. What is less well known (as JW pointed out in his book) is that the St George Soccer Association traded their headquarters site for shares in the then new St George Leagues club.

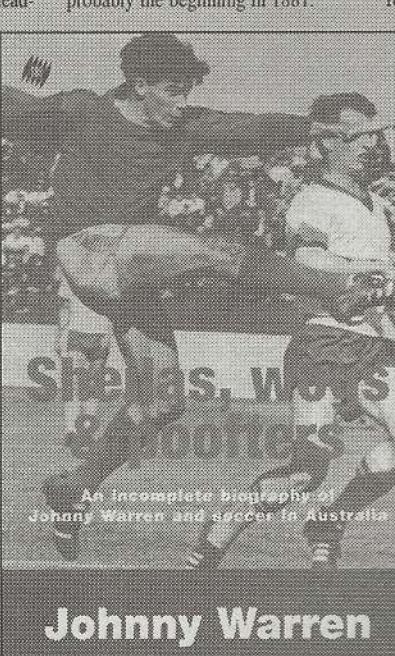
In those days licensed clubs were a license to print money in NSW.

When St George Leagues club opened on the new site it was one of the biggest and most profitable clubs in NSW for many years.

Whatever happened to those very valuable shares held in the leagues club owned by the St George Soccer Association and the dividends or proceeds ever benefit Soccer in anyway.

Regarding the old Canterbury Soccer club JW's first big club his comments are interesting but incomplete. How could anyone talk about the Canterbury Soccer club of that era and not mention the late Andy Burton.

He was Mr Canterbury Soccer then as well as being a key person in the promotion of the breakaway NSW Soccer Federation.



Johnny Warren

An incomplete biography of Johnny Warren and soccer in Australia

When they were reading high the Canterbury Soccer club had purchased a suitable block of land to build a licensed club to secure their future.

At that time more than forty years

ago there was in Sydney a small brewery (no longer in existence today) which in its eagerness to establish a marketplace for it bear would finance on generous terms well known sporting clubs that were intent on building licensed clubs with poker machines.

In the late fifties Canterbury were a strong and well known Soccer club. This brewery approached the Canterbury Soccer with a deal that really was to good to refuse but Andy Barton and to knocked them back.

They did so the basis of a demand by the brewery that only Millers Beer products be sold on the Canterbury Soccer club premises for so many years.

This was not an unreasonable demand but because Millers Beer was an unpopular brew much disliked by Sydney breakers then.

This was a disastrous decision because Canterbury Soccer clubs fortunes soon declined and the land for the licensed club was sold to try and keep the club afloat unsuccessfully.

Ironically today many of Sydney's biggest licensed clubs such as Easts Leagues owe their very existence to the Millers Brewery and the exact same type of deal the old Canterbury Soccer club rejected over forty years ago.

The more they change the more they stay the same in Oz Soccer.

The Oz Soccer the people in charge change now and again but they never learn anything.

R. Melor
Bondi, NSW.

CONFEDERATIONS CUP SHOULD BE HELD IN AUSTRALIA



Dear Sir,

I think it is a marvellous idea that Ian Knop and Soccer Australia are planning a bid to host the Confederation Cup in the near future.

It was only 18 months ago that Sydney and a number of capital cities hosted the Sydney Olympics and in 1991 Australia held a more specific Soccer event in the World Youth championships. Both events were a huge success and each were run in the ideal way of promoting the sport.

Since then Australia has acquired a many number of new stadiums that are the best in the world and we have learnt through the various events we have held in the past how to run each appropriately.

By hosting the Confederations Cup, it will serve to boost the stature of Soccer in this country. After our failed campaign for this

years World Cup, it is essentially that more world class Soccer is brought down-under to highlight the spectacle that is known as the world game.



Ian Knop: Soccer Australia Chairman has made a bid to host the Confederation Cup.

Such actions will not only serve to increase the fan-base and following of the game, but by having each continental Soccer champion here,

it will filter through to the domestic game here and have a positive influence on the game here.

FIFA should seriously consider Soccer Australia's bid not only because we have the facilities but also because Australia is a country where the full potential of Soccer can be realised and exposed to the huge number of this sport-loving community of Australia.

V.Harris
Mona Vale, NSW.

Editor's Note: The staging of the Confederations Cup will of course lift the stature of the game in Australia. All other football codes know that Soccer is the sleeping giant of sport in Australia, once woken up, who knows how far it could go.

Tournaments like these are a must for the profile of the game, Australia defiantly have the facilities for staging such an event, fingers crossed, Australia gets it in the end.

Queensland Section — Thank You ABSW



Dear Sir,

It has come to my attention that your newspaper is increasing the exposure of regional Soccer and I must say that I am delighted. The coverage of New South Wales is second to none, followed by the Victorian Premier League and so on. In last week's edition you included a page on the Queensland Soccer Federation.

This is good as it exposes Queensland Soccer to the rest of Australia. Some people don't regard Soccer in QLD as big as what it is in the traditional centres of NSW and VIC, but I can assure you that it is just as big in this state as in others.

Recently the popularity of the Brisbane Strikers has increased because of their success and now this success is being neatly complemented by your coverage of QLD state Soccer, that is often missing in the mainstream larger papers. You are

doing an outstanding in your continued promotion of the game.

R. Parkinson
MT Gravatt, QLD.

Editor's Note: Being a nation-wide publication, state federations from across each states is essential. The Queensland Premier League boasts a number of quality players who in previous years have graced the pitches of the NSL, or in time, are preparing themselves for playing in it.

Queensland is a haven for young Soccer talent, and certainly a state defiantly on the rise in the way the game is played. Our Queensland correspondent Glenn Davis has been in the game for quite some time, especially in the Queensland area, he will no doubt provide top-class information weekly from the tropical State. Glad your enjoying the section.

OFF THE CROSSBAR



By Allan Crisp

KNIGHTS LOSE SA STARS

In round one South Australian defender Mark Yates proudly led Para Hills Knights to a 1-0 win over 2001 Premier League grand finalists Modbury Jets at The Paddocks.

In round two the former Adelaide City Force player was a member of the first team squad for Adelaide Galaxy against reigning champions the Blue Eagles at Marden.

Another State team star, Jason Trimboli also was in the Knights team that triumphed over the Jets in the first round clash, but the striker turned out for Raiders against Olympic FC in a second round game on Saturday.



Mark Yates: In little over one week the former Force defender switched from Para Hills to the Adelaide Galaxy.

The defections came after Para Hills cut the match payments of its entire senior player by 50 per cent.

Senior coach Greg Mills and his assistant Noel Clarke also has been asked to accept a pay reduction. The pair have been considering their positions, but continued to take training and were in charge against Adelaide City on Saturday.

The initial reaction from the players was so intense that a mass walkout looked on the cards, but Para Hills chairman Peter Greco was confident that the core of the first team squad would stay.

"Our finance manager informed us that the club simply cannot afford the high wage bill, so we had no alternative but to reduce the wages," Greco said.

"The players have done nothing wrong, so we will decided not stand in the way of anybody who decides to leave."

Greco said the cost cutting measure had arisen because an expected sponsorship had collapsed.

"We are not in receivership and we don't have debt collectors banging on our door," Greco said.

"But that could have happened had we not taken this action. Greco reported that the players who remain have been told they can run functions at the club with any profits shared by the players.

"Morally and ethically we believe that we have done the right thing and that the club will emerge with its reputation in tact.

"We have a fantastic group of young players who could have asked for transfers, yet decided to stay with us," Greco said.

LIBERIAN LIKES GALAXY

Liberian international Andy Amegashie has left the civil war torn atmosphere of his native country to rekindle his football career in Australia.

Amegashie played one NSL match for Olympic Sharks before switching to Canterbury Marrickville Olympic and has now gone on loan from the NSW Premier League club to the Adelaide Galaxy.

The newcomer made an immediate impression when he replaced Galaxy favourite Daniel Ferreira for the final 60 minutes of the first round Premier League Friday night fixture, won 6-0 over Adelaide City Zebras.

Galaxy coach Milan Ivanovic said Amegashie was settling in well and mixing well with his new teammates.

"It's easier for defenders than strikers to settle into a new side because so much more is expected of forwards," Ivanovic said.



Andy Amegashie: The Liberian international has switched from NSW Premier League side Canterbury Marrickville to the Adelaide Galaxy.

Meanwhile, Galaxy created a slice of SA soccer history by staging the first official league game to be accompanied by exploding fireworks each time a goal was scored during that first round match.

Galaxy officials must have expected a higher score because there were sufficient pyrotechnics left for two more celebratory displays to shoot skywards.

POOR TRAVELLERS

NSL's penultimate Round 25 will be crunch time for Adelaide City when the Force travel across the Tasman to face the Kiwi Kingz.

Not only will Adelaide City be striving to avoid collecting the wooden spoon for the first time in its illustrious history, but the SA club will be determined NOT to be the sole team to fail to win an away game during season 2001-2002.

Should that ignominious loss occur, City would not be the first team to go through an NSL campaign without collecting full points.

Thanks to Soccer Australia statistician, Andrew Howe, we can relate that 10 clubs have played through a complete season without an away victory.

They were Brisbane Strikers (1992/93), Brisbane Lions (1998), Preston (92/93), Sydney United (99/00), Wollongong Macedonia (90/91), Canberra Cosmos (96/97), Canberra City (1986), Canberra Cosmos (97/98), Brisbane Lions (83), Brisbane City (80).

PAST AND PRESENT

Adelaide City has confirmed that when it draws the curtain on the 2001/2002 season with the round 26 clash with Sydney United at Hindmarsh Stadium on Sunday, April 7, entry will be free of charge.

The main match will kick-off at 2.30pm, but will serve as a curtain raiser to one of the SASF Centenary celebration games between the two oldest remaining clubs in the State Port Adelaide (now the Pirates) and Birkalla Rovers (now Adelaide Galaxy).

A meeting in 1902 brought about the formation of the first official league and in 1903 the first clubs were South Adelaide, Woodville and North Adelaide, with Port Adelaide and Sturt following a year later.

History tells us that Birkalla Rovers began life as the Ascot Park club, spawning a remarkably successful outfit that won six first division championships, three second division titles and four Federation Cup triumphs.

Honours continued to flow when Birkalla amalgamated with West Torrens as the club took out the 1988 first division title, four second division State League championships a Federation Cup win, a Coca Cola Cup success and a variety of under age competitions.

Current president, Jack Smith, Alby Castle, Ron Bracéigirdle and Leon Hill gained Australian caps while members of the great club.

Other ex-Birkalla players, Jack Mather, Alex Tobin, Sergio Melta, Steve Maxwell and Charley Villani also were honoured with Socceroo selection.

SO WHAT'S NEW?

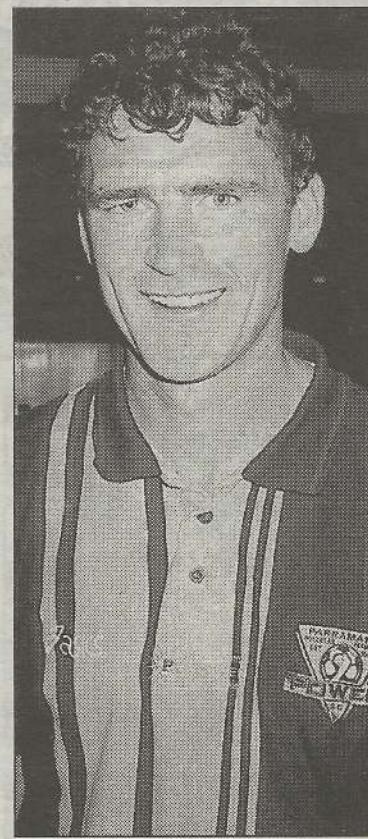
FIFA General Secretary Michel Zen Ruffinen penned this thought-provoking editorial earlier this month.

"There is a picture in a newly published and handsome collection of black and white non-action football photographs that I just cannot get out of my head.

The book is a thoughtful selection of images that sets out to plot the development of football as a social phenomenon over the six decades of last century from the twenties to the eighties.

They are wonderful pictorial recordings of days, faces and customs which may be long gone but which thanks to books such as this are not forgotten.

The picture that fascinates me is the epitome of the age in which it was taken,



Alex Tobin: Ex Birkalla star who was honoured with Socceroo selection.

the early 1950s.

The then captain of England, Billy Wright (who went on to play 105 times for his country), is sitting in front of the fire on the floor of a very bourgeois front room, wearing a nice woolly pullover and tie, short hair properly combed, reading a book, resting back against his fairly corpulent and substantially older landlady, herself sitting up in an armchair Darning his socks.

DARNING HIS SOCKS!

Fast forward half a century, and try to imagine today's captain of England, David Beckham, he of the Versace suits and \$600 haircuts, sitting there while pop-star wife, Victoria, sews the holes in his socks no, not easy is it?

Habits change with the times. Of course they do, also in football.

The 1950s picture conveys an age of simplicity, naivety some may say, an age that we shall never see again. Shame in some ways, but, inevitable.

But, wait. On the page facing the Wolverhampton fireplace idyll is another picture of the same Billy Wright, this time in England blazer, very smart, surrounded by three rather glamorous young ladies.

Who are they especially the tallest and prettiest? They were the Beverley Sisters, a singing trio, the Spice Girls of post-War Britain. And the most striking, whom Billy very clearly has his eye on, is Joy Beverley his wife.

Aha! England captain, singing star wife. Plus change. So lets not be too quick to smirk at the images of half a century ago. Lets just remember that our own children and grandchildren will almost certainly be doing just the same thing about David Beckham and the rest of us in 50 years time.

A sobering thought, maybe, but also somehow an encouraging one."

PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 2

Modbury Jets 0, White City 3 (Mobi 3) Best Modbury Jets; Dobson, Crowl, Stuart; White City: Beltrame, Tassone, Bernadino.

Blue Eagles 0, Adelaide Galaxy 1

(Amegashie). Best Blue Eagles: Perin, Deleso, Sergi; Galaxy: Pezos, Karitevelli, Yates.

Adelaide Zebras 2 (Budin, Mercurio). Para Hills Knights 4 (M. Moore, Gooding, Kelly, Breton). Best Zebras: Budin, Sareceno, Mercurio; Para Hills: M. Moore, Kelly, Breton.

Pirates 0. Campbelltown Red Devils

5 (Senesi 2, DeGiovanniello, Udagawa, L. Campbell). Best Pirates: Iacopetta, Unglaube, Talbot; Red Devils: Senesi, DeGiovanniello, Savio.

Metro Stars 1 (Sordillo) Playford

Patriots 1 (Georgiou). Best Metro Stars: Sen, Scalzi, D. Menecella; Playford Patriots: Kidd, Childs, Robertson.

Olympic FC 1 (S. Pappas) Raiders 2 (Trimboli, S. Widera). Best Olympic: Mantzarapis, Tosh, Parisos; Raiders: D. Menecella, Katapetis, Trimboli.

STATE LEAGUE

Salisbury United 1 (Ward) Hills Hawks 1 (Harvey). Best Salisbury: Blackwood, Peace, Carberry; Hills Hawks: Hawthorn, Keegan, S. Bowden.

Port Pirie City 2 (Motley 2) Panthers 1 (Rideout). Best Port Pirie: Dawson, Motley, Edmondson; Panthers: Kwas, Arris, O'Dell.

Seaford Surfers 0 Western Strikers 3 (Barbaro, Grossi, Maresca). Best Seaford: Honeyman, Pearce, Davidson; Strikers: Barbaro, Grossi, Maresca.

Enfield Falcons 5 (Mulady 3, Farncombe 2) Noarlunga Bulldogs 0. Best Enfield: Costa, Mulady, Rechici; Noarlunga: McLean, Foy, McArdle.

Cumberland Foxes 4 (Schmidt 2, Fowler, Green) Northern Demons: Nicholls, Salvemini, Mezzino.

Croydon Kings 3 (Musolino 2, McMillan) Cobras 0. Best Croydon: Muolino, Plummer, Matikulas; Cobras: Pontikas, P. Harpas, Stamatopoulos.

PREMIER LEAGUE

ROUND 3

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Adelaide Galaxy v Metro Stars

Adelaide Zebras v Blue Eagles

Playford Patriots v Pirates

Campbelltown City v Olympic FC

Raiders v Modbury Jets

Para Hills Knights v White City

STATE LEAGUE

Panthers v Seaford Surfers

Salisbury United v Port Pirie

Northern Demons v Cobras

Noarlunga Bulldogs v Cumberland

Foxes

Western Strikers v Enfield Falcons

Hills Hawks v Croydon Kings

ABSW's SA correspondent, Allan Crisp, soccer promoter, Angelo Picca, West Beach coach Peter Millar and SBS "On The Ball" anchor, Kyle Patterson can be heard on the 1197 AM RPH Adelaide Marshall Thompson/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-9am.

Former Australian international and Adelaide City coach, John Perin and The Advertiser soccer writer, Meno Tousidis, join Crisp for the 1197 AM RPH SOS (Soccer on Sunday) program from 8.30am-9.30am, when the latest NSL, overseas and local soccer scores are aired along with fast breaking news, views and interviews.



Queensland Lions Soccer Club

Phone: (07) 3271 3636 • Fax: (07) 3271 3804

www.qldlions.com

133 Pine Rd, RICHLANDS QLD 4077



Premier League Wrap-Up By GLENN DAVIS

Former Socceroo stalwart Col Bennett expects to know in the coming weeks whether Easts are championship contenders or pretenders after thrashing Mt. Gravatt 6-1 at Dittmer Park last Saturday night.

Bennett, who had a long stint as a player with Brisbane Lions in the national league in the late 1970's and 80's has steered Easts to a win and two draws from three games in the Brisbane premier league.

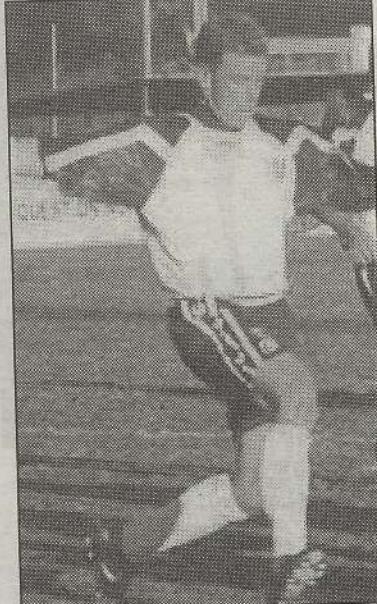
Bennett only took over coaching Easts' first grade side late last year after former coach Frank Byrne resigned when the Tigers slipped into the relegation zone.

"To get a good win like this will give us a lot of confidence for when we play Queensland Lions and the Gold Coast in our next two games," Bennett said.



Steve Dawe: Lions star scored the second goal to see them dispose North Star 3-0.

Photo courtesy of Paul Harley



Craig Slaughter: Taringa star hit a brace in his side's 4-1 win over The Gap.

Photo courtesy of Paul Harley

"I rate Lions and Gold Coast the best two sides in the league and how we play against them will give me an indication how good we are.

"The biggest disappointment against Mt. Gravatt was conceding a goal.

"If we can have a defensive record that's in the top two or three in league then that'll go a long way towards us making the top six.

"Conceding goals will hurt you at the end of the season and already I think we should be up there with Lions and Brisbane City as we should have beaten Rochedale and Toowoomba in the first two rounds."

Easts scored three goals in each half to easily account for Mt. Gravatt who were missing regular keeper Graham Ross who was suspended for three weeks following last week's send-off against Ipswich Knights.

"Mt. Gravatt had a young keeper in goal who didn't have the best of games and we punished him," Bennett said.

Easts' goals were shared in a series of doubles from Norwegian midfielder Joachim Kleine, striker Shane Coffey and Gerard Brown.

Queensland Lions also remain unbeaten and lead the table after a comfortable 3-0 win over newly promoted North Star.

Lions, who are yet to concede a goal this season, picked up maximum points for the third time with goals from Des Hughes, Steve Dawe and Jamie Lowndes.

Hughes gave Lions a 1-0 lead chipping North Star keeper Daniel Duke midway through the first half before Dawe made it two in the 70th minute with a scrambling shot after Duke blocked two earlier shots.

Lowndes rose high to head home a corner five minutes later to put any hope of a North Star fightback out of reach.

Coach Miron Bleiberg had some praise for North Star despite Lion's resounding victory.

"I think they'll be a middle of the table side but could challenge for the Top Six." He said.

Taringa Rovers scored their first win of the season with a 4-1 thrashing over newly promoted The Gap who remain winless since being promoted to the premier league this season.

After a tight first half in which The Gap held the home team to 1-all, Taringa piled on three second half goals.

Taringa took a 1-nil lead after 20 minutes when Craig Slaughter headed home a Scott Robertson corner but The Gap hit back ten minutes from the interval to level the game after a goalkeeping error from Clint Del Santo.

Taringa were back in front five minutes after the resumption when

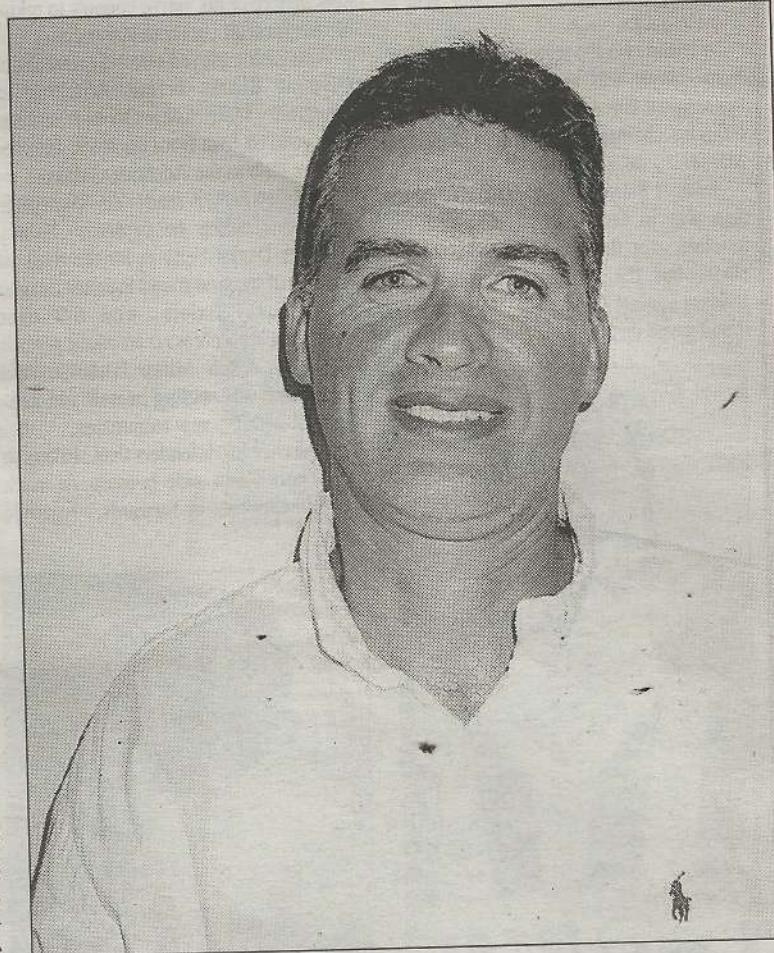
Slaughter picked up his double running onto a superb pass from Robertson to drive home with his left foot.

From a similar move, Taringa increased their lead to 3-1 within three minutes when midfielder Craig Collins scored his first goal of the season.

Taringa had a chance to increase their

"We drew against the Gold Coast then were unlucky not to get something out of the Lions game after having a man sent off and now we've won our first game.

"We're performing better each game. We've got a new side this year and we're still getting to know each other."



Miron Bleiberg: Queensland Lions coach was content with his sides 3-0 win over North Star.

lead further but Collins missed from the penalty spot blasting over the crossbar midway through the second half.

The final nail in The Gap's coffin was driven in by substitute Reza Asyen five minutes from time.

The win pleased coach John Ogden who is back in charge of Taringa after a brief stint as coach of Brisbane Lions last year.

"We've had three good performances in our three games so far," Ogden said.

The win was some consolation for Taringa after it was confirmed last week midfielder Shaun Molenda needed a knee reconstruction and would miss the season after being hurt early in the game against Queensland Lions in round two.

In other games Brisbane City also remained undefeated beating Rochedale 2-0, Wynnum downed Toowoomba 2-1 while Ipswich Knights and Gold Coast drew 2-all.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Round 3

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Queensland	3	3	0	0	7	0	9
Brisbane City	3	3	0	0	8	2	9
Wynnum	3	2	1	0	6	4	6
IPSW Knights	3	1	0	2	10	4	5
Eastern Suburbs	3	1	0	2	7	2	5
Gold Coast City	3	1	0	2	7	3	5
Taringa Rovers	3	1	1	1	5	3	4
North Star	3	1	2	0	2	7	3
Rochedale Rovers	3	0	1	2	3	5	2
T'wmba Raiders	3	0	2	1	2	5	1
The Gap	3	0	3	0	1	10	0
Mt Gravatt	3	0	3	0	1	14	0

Results for Round 3

Brisbane City	2	Rochedale Rovers	0
Eastern Suburbs	6	Mt Gravatt	1
IPSW Knights	2	Gold Coast City	2
Queensland Lions	3	North Star	0
Taringa Rovers	4	The Gap	1
Wynnum	2	T'wmba Raiders	1

FIRST DIVISION

Round 4

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Souths Utd	4	4	0	0	21	0	12
Pine Rivers Utd	4	3	0	1	8	1	10
Mitchelton	4	3	0	1	11	5	10
Bundaberg Waves	4	3	1	0	7	5	9
Redlands Utd	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Inala City	4	2	2	0	9	8	6
Newmarket	4	2	2	0	7	6	6
Rocklea Utd	4	2	2	0	7	9	6
Capalaba	4	1	2	1	9	6	4
Albany Creek	4	1	2	1	4	11	4
Uni of Qld	4	0	2	2	3	8	2
Grange Thistle	4	0	3	1	3	12	1
Slacks Creek	4	0	3	1	2	11	1
Brisbane Olympic Uni	4	0	3	1	2	12	1

Results for Round 3

Rocklea Utd	2	Albany Creek	0
Redlands Utd	2	Brisbane Olympic Uni	0
Pine Rivers Utd	3	Bundaberg Waves	0
Newmarket	3	Capalaba	1
Mitchelton	5	Grange Thistle	1
Inala City	3	Uni of Qld	2
South Utd	4	Slacks Creek	0

WEEKEND FIRST GRADE FIXTURES

◆ ROUND 4 ◆

Friday 5th April
The Gap vs North Star

7.30pm

Saturday 6th April
Gold Coast City vs Eastern Suburbs
Mt Gravatt vs Brisbane City
Rochedale Rovers vs T'wmba Raiders

7.00pm
6.00pm
7.00pm

Sunday 7th April
Queensland Lions vs IPSW Knights
Taringa Rovers vs Wynnum

4.00pm
6.00pm

NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

www.nswpremierleague.com



FEATURE MATCH

Fairfield Bulls

VS

Parramatta Eagles

KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 30 March 2002

VENUE: Nineveh Field, 673 Smithfield Road, Edensor Park

Two of the title contenders shape up in the Match of the Round, with both sides desperate for a win. Fairfield have been travelling well in recent weeks and after suffering a disappointing loss to Blacktown City in Round Sixteen, have regrouped to post four wins and a draw from their past five starts.

With striker Marc Hoenselaars leading the way the Bulls have turned their season around and stand on the brink of their first ever Premier League Top Five appearance.

"We have been playing well in recent weeks," said coach Craig Sharpley. "We have been winning games and playing some good football and that has been encouraging."

Marc Hoenselaars has scored 13 goals in the past 9 games and he will be the man to watch for the Bulls. His partner Mathew Borg has been troubled by niggling injuries all season but even he has the uncanny knack of bobbing up when a game-breaking goal is required.

"Parramatta will be tough," conceded Sharpley. "They beat us in the first round and have a number of players we need to key a check on. But if we hold them at the back and get the ball moving quickly to our forwards we give ourselves a very good chance of pulling off a win."

With Bonnyrigg dropping some points last week to Sutherland, the stage is now set for the Eagles to make the Premiership trophy their own. With just two games left to play Parramatta will need to slip up in both games to give their opponents a sniff. According to midfielder Daniel Cummins, that sort of scenario is not even being discussed down at Melita Stadium.

"We have our eyes fixed firmly on the premiership and championship double," said Cummins. "The whole club is in a positive frame of mind, we are winning games and looking forward to the semi-finals."

With the likes of Jim Bakis, Daniel Kukucka, Glenn Sprod and Cummins him-

self, the Eagles have more than enough attacking cattle to take the game right up to Fairfield. Connolly, Richardson and Bourke will need to be right on their games if they are to deny the Eagles and give their side a chance.

"The Bulls have a lot of classy defenders," said Cummins. "Connolly, Richardson, Maric and Bourke are all big and strong defenders who can make life tough for a striker. So we will need to be sharp and focused this week and make sure we don't make any mistakes at the back. If we can do that we have a great chance."

Round Ten result: Parramatta Eagles 4 (Cummins, Kukucka, Sprod, Delicata) Fairfield Bulls 1 (Hoenselaars)



Super striker Marc Hoenselaars

The Fairfield Bulls are proudly sponsored by The Nineveh Sports & Community Club

PREMIER LEAGUE

ROUND 21

Saturday March 30

		1st Grade U19
St George	v Central Coast	St George Stad. 7:00pm 5:00pm
Fairfield Bulls	v P'matta Eagles	Nineveh Field 7:00pm 5:00pm
Bonnyrigg WE	v C'bury-M'ville	Serbian Centre 7:00pm 5:00pm
Bankstown City	v S'land Sharks	Jensen Park 7:00pm 5:00pm
Blacktown City	v Penrith Panthers	Gabbie Stadium 7:00pm 5:00pm

Sunday March 31

		1st Grade U19
Leichhardt Tigers	v Belconnen BD	Lambert Park 5:00pm 3:00pm

ROUND 22

Saturday April 6

		1st Grade U19
Penrith Panthers	v Fairfield Bulls	Andrews Rd Fld 7:00pm 5:00pm
P'matta Eagles	v Leichhardt Tigers	Melita Stadium 7:00pm 5:00pm
Belconnen BD	v St George Saints	Greenway Oval 7:00pm 5:00pm
Central Coast	v Bonnyrigg WE	Plum Park 7:00pm 5:00pm
C'bury-M'ville	v Bankstown City	Henson Park 7:00pm 5:00pm
S'land Sharks	v Blacktown City	Seymour Shaw 7:00pm 5:00pm



The *Cafe La Scala* Player of the Week after Round 20 of the NSW Premier League is:

Cafe La Scala

ADAM KURTZ
Sutherland Sharks

Cafe La Scala is located at Shop 32, Piazza Level,
Italian Forum, 23 Norton St, Leichhardt. Phone: (02) 9572 8577

Inside ... Inside ...

- From The Sidelines P15
- Match Reports P16-17
- Finals in Focus P18
- Scoreboard & Picture Gallery P19



NSW Premier League



PREVIEW ROUND TWENTY-ONE

THE PENULTIMATE ROUND



St George Saints

v

Central Coast Coasties



KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 30 March 2002

VENUE: St George Stadium, 88 Bestic St, Rockdale

While this game has no bearing on the Top Five, there is a lot more than pride at stake.

The Coasties currently reside in 9th spot and have the Saints breathing down their necks a point behind in 10th. Should the Saints pick up the three points they will leapfrog the Coasties and push further up the table.

After picking up seven competition points in their past four starts the home side are the favourites in this game, but the Central Coast are more than capable with a good game expected.

*Round Ten result: Central Coast 1 (Williams)
St. George 1 (Permall)*



Next game is Saints v Coasties

**St George Saints are proudly sponsored by St George Rowing Club,
The Soccer-Football Bus & Century 21 Princes Hwy Rockdale**



Bonnyrigg White Eagles

v

Canterbury-Marrickville



KICK-OFF: 7.00pm & 5.00pm, Saturday 30 March 2002

VENUE: Serbian Centre, 13 Simpson Road, Bonnyrigg

Bonnyrigg just about threw away their chances for the Premiership last weekend, conceding a late equaliser to Sutherland. Their form continues to be a little erratic having won only one of their past four starts and coach Greg Woodhouse will need to get the side back into a winning frame of mind with the semi-finals just around the corner.

Their final game is against the Central Coast and they will need two wins to cement a top three berth. The Berries havent won a game since February 8th and its hard to see them troubling one of the title favourites here.

Round Ten result: Canterbury-Marrickville 0 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 (Knight)



Ivan Necevski: Bonnyrigg's Number One.

**Bonnyrigg White Eagles are proudly sponsored by
B & S Windows**

Bankstown City Lions

v

Sutherland Sharks



KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 30 March 2002

VENUE: Jensen Park, Clapham Road, Sefton

Sadly the Lions push for the post season came to an abrupt halt last weekend at the hands of Blacktown City.

Coach Ljube Jancev had done a tremendous job with this side, even taking them to the Top Five for a brief period midway through the season.

But those dreams have all dissipated and there is only pride on the line this week with the visit of the Sharks. Sutherland proved last week they are capable of stealing points off sides if the opposition relaxes so the Lions will need to be fit and focused to make sure of a win here.

Round Ten result: Sutherland 2 (M.Pfengle x2 incl a pen) Bankstown City 4 (Dimitrievski, Luff, Umlil, Trposki)



Fred Umlil of Bankstown City Lions.

Bankstown City Lions are proudly sponsored by The Good Guys @ Bankstown, ASU - All Sewn Up, New Tech Automotive, Direct Smash Repairs, G. Mack & Co. Accountants, Alex Electrical, Bucinski Accounting Enterprises, BP Yagoona, I&V Plaster, D&S Gyproc, Australiers, M&S Variety, Australian Mortgage Options, P&E Landscaping & Maintenance, D&V Building Suppliers, Bexley North Cellars, IGA - Springwood, MACO.com.au, Wholesale Trailers



Blacktown City Demons

vs

Penrith Panthers



KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 30 March 2002

VENUE: Gabbie Stadium, Quinn Ave, Seven Hills

Blacktown Coach Brian Brown will know his side can't afford any slip ups this close to the semi-finals and his side will be pulling out all stops to knock over the Panthers this week.

The Demons unbeaten run stretched to eleven games last week and they are really starting to hit top form at the right time of the year.

Next week they face Sutherland, so they are really in the box seat to take a full six points from their remaining matches to remain in the Top Five.

Round Ten result: Penrith Panthers 1 (Hutchinson) Blacktown City 1 (Hagger)



The Penrith Panthers

Blacktown City Demons are proudly sponsored by Perfection Milk, West Ham United Football Club, Cadbury-Schweppes, Wonderland Travel, Independent Gaming Systems



NSW Premier League

FROM THE SIDELINES

with Greg Stock and Paul Goodwin

Fresh from the success of playing their last home game at Kogarah Jubilee Oval, the Saints are organising a bus trip to Canberra for their Round 22 clash with the Belconnen Blue Devils.

The cost is \$30 per person with the bus to depart St. George Stadium at 12.30pm for the trip south. Tickets can be organised through Les Farkas on 9824 2772 and bookings must be made on or before Wednesday the 3rd of April to guarantee numbers.

◆◆◆◆
The Sutherland Sharks held their annual general meeting last Wednesday at the Seymour Shaw clubrooms and have elected a new committee.

They are; Club President George Hurley, Senior Vice President Billy McColl, Junior Vice President David Carmichael, Secretary Chris Downie, Treasurer Bruce Lawrence and Committee members Richard May, David Latchford, Ben Maiorana, Ross Maiorana and John Hill.

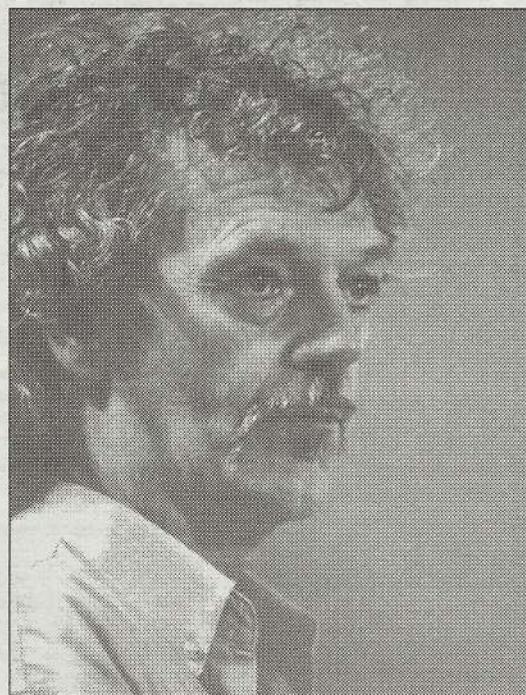
The new committee sees former long serving President Richard May stand down in favour of a spot on the committee but new Senior Vice President and current club coach Billy McColl sees the move as a positive one.

"Richard has been a tireless worker for the club over the past few years," said McColl, but the new President is not about politics but more about capitalising on the excellent

work Richard started and using his expertise and experience behind the scenes.

There is renewed optimism in the club with a

David Reid, Jimmy Nikas and Naoki Imaya have created and scored a lot of goals in recent weeks and we have our fingers crossed their



Parramatta Eagles' coach Tam Finlayson to quit at the end of the season.

new coach in John Turner and a new committee," said McColl.

◆◆◆◆
Blacktown City has come storming back into calculations for the Premier League Top Five. Coach Brian Brown has a few injury problems in the camp with Zak Donev, Paul Dee and Damien Foxe all nursing some niggling problems.

"We are a bit light on at the moment," said Brown, "but it's been our stability and lack of changes in recent games that has given us the success."

Brown made special mention of a number of key players that are leading the way on the park, ex Sydney United defend-

good form will continue."

◆◆◆◆

News from Lambert Park where Leichhardt Tigers well travelled striker, Derek Poimer, could soon be on the move, having recently trialled with a Chinese club

Assistant coach Ian Wood was presented with a baby daughter two weeks ago by his wife Jo. It seems the proud father is still in a state of shock

Coach Les De Celis missed a rare game against Central Coast last Saturday night to attend his daughter's 21st birthday party

According to all reports, ex Sydney United defend-

er Joe Moric has been in outstanding form recently after taking a little time to find his feet in the Leichhardt setup. His runs down the left flank and his covering work in defence have made him a very valued member of the Tigers' squad.

◆◆◆◆

Tam Finlayson the current Parramatta Eagles first grade coach will be cutting ties with the Club at the end of this season.

Tam and his good wife Marion have decided to migrate north of the border to Bundaberg in preparation for their retirement.

Tam was able to secure a transfer in his position as Store Manager with Cooks Plumbing to sunny Queensland and will take up the post later this year.

Tam and Marion have been a double act around the soccer scene for over thirty years, firstly during his playing days, followed by his coaching.

Tam has coached mostly in youth league, winning a number of metropolitan and state championships, before accepting the challenge from the Eagles last year

to coach the first grade.

During his stint with the youth league, Tam coached at Blacktown City and Parramatta Eagles and he has helped many players to kick start their soccer careers, notably players like Craig Moore, Hayden Foxe, Ahmed Elrich and Zelko Kalac.

The Eagles are currently first in the Premier League and they are hoping that Tam will leave the Club a winner.

Both Tam and Marion will be missed around the soccer fields in Sydney not only by the Eagles officials and supporters but from other Clubs as well.

The Eagles want to wish both Tam and Marion all the best in the future and urge that they don't forget to leave their address behind so that we can all visit you'.

◆◆◆◆
Penrith are pleased to report that flowing on from their first grade and their youth retention program they have been able also come to agreement with their existing senior coaching team of Tony Rassmussen and Greg McGriskin for the 2002/2003 season.

Hawkesbury has called each of the Panthers home games throughout the season, and an expansion to a full home and away coverage is being planned for the New Year.

As stated by Panthers' President Alan Perkins, Rassmussen and his coaching team have done a great job through 2001/2002, and the retention is just rewards for their efforts and commitment.

Rassmussen and McGriskin will be joined by additional coaching and support staff, some of which the Panthers are currently in negotiations with.

The next phase of the 2002/2003 planning is to look into the market and locate some three or four experienced first grade players to support the existing youthful squad. Like Rassmussen the Panthers Executives sees the benefits in seeking such an expansion of the squad.

In other news from the Panthers den, the Penrith Committee wishes to thank Hawkesbury Radio 89.9FM for their efforts throughout the 2001/2002 season.

The famed mascot, the only mascot in the league, has been to every game in the past, both home and away, entertaining crowds from all clubs and was severely missed for the match against Fairfield.

thank Noel and the team for their efforts and their assistance in promoting their match. The soccer calls has also created a new radio celebrity, in Warren "the Rock Dog" Dalton.

Dalton the current Under 11 Cadet League coach of the Panthers is the Hawkesbury Radio's sideline eye. Dalton undertakes his new role with intensity and flair, and has become a talking point from within the Panthers camp. Even in the deep of an intense contest, Dalton can always get a comment from the Panthers bench as they listen to his, at time strange, sideline views.

◆◆◆◆
For Belconnen Blue Devils fans it was a rare sight last Saturday, or should we say it was a rare non-sight, of the Blue Devil himself as he was called away on other duties.

The fabled mascot, the only mascot in the league, has been to every game in the past, both home and away, entertaining crowds from all clubs and was severely missed for the match against Fairfield.

NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

EDITOR:
PRODUCTION:

Binesh Mudaliar
Daniel Kuziow, Elly Vea, Mary Quartly,
Mark Stavroulakis
Greg Stock, Paul Goodwin, Claire Killeen,
Lezette Isaac, Ray Sandell, Nick Guoth,
Robbie Bartolillo, Gary Vandeburgt, Jo Boyd
Carlos Furtado

★ All information is courtesy of the New South Wales Soccer Federation.

NSWSF

Valentine Sports Park
235-257 Meurants Lane
GLENWOOD NSW 2768
Phone: (02) 9629 1800



Leichhardt Tigers

V

Belconnen Blue Devils



KICK-OFF: 5pm & 3pm, Sunday 31 March 2002
VENUE: Lambert Park, Marion St, Leichhardt

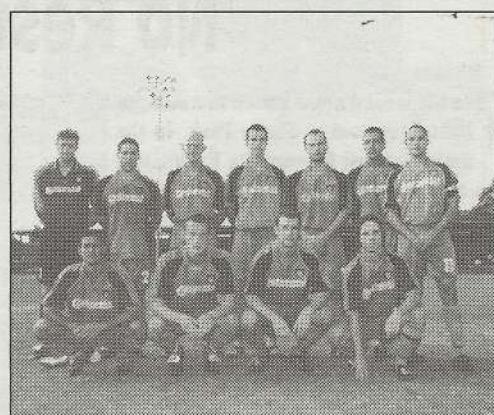
This match holds the fortunes of both sides post season ambitions. A loss for either side could see them fall out of contention, while a win will see them fight on for another week.

The Tigers game last week against the Coasties was abandoned due to a light failure and with that game in hand, they'll consider themselves a better than even chance for the Top Five.

But with the likes of Daniel Macor and Marko Mad Max Perinovic on the Blue Devils forward line this game will be a tremendous tussle worthy of the post season.

The Tigers face Parramatta Eagles away in Round 22 while the Blue Devils take on the Saints at home setting up this showdown as one of the matches of the round.

Round Ten result: Belconnen Blue Devils 2 (Lazzari, Lyons) Leichhardt Tigers 3 (Poimer x2, Brown)



The Leichhardt Tigers

Leichhardt Tigers are proudly sponsored by Continental Tyres and Western Suburbs Leagues Club



NSW Premier League



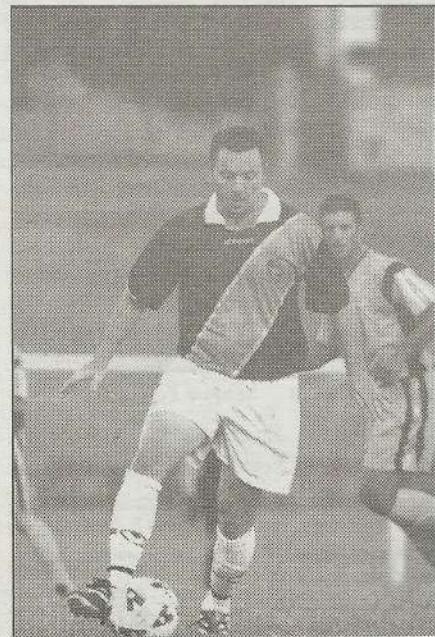
Belconnen BD Fairfield Bulls

By Gary Vandeburgt

The Belconnen Blue Devils and Fairfield Bulls played out a thrilling second half on route to a 4-4 draw at Hawker Oval on Saturday night. The Blue Devils first blew a 3-0 lead after the 56th minute and then a 4-3 lead with only 10 minutes to play.

Two goals to Blue Devil striker Marko Perinovic, in the 21st and 33rd minutes, gave the Blue Devils a secure lead which would have been greater if not for some poor finishing.

Golden boot frontrunner Daniel Macor scored his 16th goal of the season to give the home side a comfortable 3-0 lead ten minutes after halftime. The movement started with Shane Lyons receiving the ball in open space near halfway. Lyons crossed to the left side of the field, finding Mike Katz alone near the penalty area. Katz, easily best on field, chipped back over the defence to Macor, who chested the ball down, turned, and outmaneuvered Bulls keeper Frank Mikuletic before launching a successful shot.



Daniel Macor: 17 goals this season.

4
4

In the 64th minute, the wheels began to fall off for the Blue Devils. David Milin failed to control a pass 30 metres out from goal, allowing Bulls striker Marc Hoenselaars to pounce and beat keeper Anthony Giannasca in a one-on-one.

Two minutes later, Belconnen defender Toplica Popovich tried to head clear a high ball but succeeded only in putting it past Giannasca for an own goal.

Fairfield equalised four minutes after that when the Blue Devils defence failed to clean up a relatively tame cross into the six-yard box. Jason Connolly got to the bouncing ball and headed it past the livid Giannasca.

The Blue Devils regained the lead in the 74th minute with Macor's second goal of the match. Replacement Adrian Dowling stole the ball near midfield then immediately chipped over the defence to find Macor at the edge of the penalty area, who left Mikuletic floundering with an accurate strike from a slight angle.

Seven minutes later, another butchered cross in the Belconnen goalmouth presented Hoenselaars with a relatively easy header to secure a vital, if fortunate, draw.

Belconnen Blue Devils 4 (Perinovic 21, 33, Macor 56, 74)

Fairfield Bulls 4 (Hoenselaars 64, 81, Connolly 70, Popovich own goal 66)

Belconnen: Giannasca, Popovich, Zwangobani, Lyons, Kemp (Dowling 60), Katz, Macor, Arranz (Mauro 77), Camara, Perinovic, Milin

Fairfield: Mikuletic, Snyder (Harrison 60), Dihm, Richardson, Van Bentum, Hoenselaars, Borg, Maric, Boesveld (Ravanello 60), Bourke (Younis 77), Connolly

Yellow cards:

Belconnen: Camara 41, Macor 45, Popovich 45+

Fairfield: Hoenselaars 21, Bourke 32, Borg 40

Referee: Chris Blain. Linesmen: Trevor May, David Weibe.

Fourth Official: None.

Coasties v Tigers No Result

For the second home match in a row the lights went out at Pluim Park. In the match against Parramatta Eagles, two weeks ago, the blackout was caused by an electrical storm. This time it was caused by an apparent lack of maintenance after the last event. After three attempts to continue the match referee Boyd McGregor decided enough was enough and called the game off.

The match started at a hectic pace with the Tigers obviously intending to win the match in the first twenty minutes as up to then the Coasties hardly got out of their own half. Within a minute Darren Moore had to bring off a goal saving effort from Derek Poimer following a run by Jeremy Brown.

Three minutes later Moore had to repeat his earlier effort when James Stubbs-Mills ran through a tardy Coasties defence. Four minutes



Pluim Park: Lights out.



later Galluzzo missed when he shot wide from five metres. Leichhardt were rampaging and the Coasties had no answer! Yet again the Tigers had no goals!

Coasties settled and a cross by Peter Haynes found the head of Ryan McKendrick and his header hit the bar with Andrews Crews well beaten. Up the other end Poimer shot from twenty-five metres and Moore could only parry the ball to Sam La Rocca whose header went over the bar.

Three minutes before the half time break the lights went out. Referee McGregor decided to take the break and when the lights came back on the players played the remaining three minutes of the first half and turned straight around for the restart.

The lights went out again! Seven minutes later the lights were back on and the game restarted. Within thirty seconds La Rocca had put the Tigers in front with a goal following a goal mouth scramble. One minute later Steve Karavataki added a second following a good run by La Rocca. Four minutes later the lights went out again. Referee Boyd McGregor's patience was over and he abandoned the match.

It had been a bad night for the Coasties. They had lost the lead in the Under 19 competition

Blacktown City 3
Bankstown City Lions 1

By Paul Goodwin

Blacktown City maintained their strong recent form, that has now virtually secured them a finals spot, by defeating Bankstown City Lions 3-1 at the Gabbie Stadium on Saturday night.

After looking the dominant side early and going to a solid 1-0 half time lead, the Demons were rocked by a Bankstown equaliser soon after the restart, as a Leo Carle-inspired Lions surged back into the game and threw everything at Blacktown, as they knew they had to.

They were a revelation and really looked like causing an upset for a long period, but poor finishing and alert keeping by John Crawley kept them from adding to their score.

Meanwhile, the Demons were able to claw their way back and regain the lead, against the run of play, with a combination of circumstances assisting them as they scored twice in the last 16 minutes.

The first goal of the game was a swift one. Naoki Imaya won the ball on the edge of the box and threaded the ball through for David Reid, now established in a striker's role in the absence of Zlatko Donev and the skilful former Bonnyrigg man calmly rounded the keeper and slotted the ball home.

Just moments earlier Bankstown could well have taken the lead themselves when the very visionary Dong Ki-Kim sent Steve Dimitrievski away with a superb long ball from well inside the Lions' half, only for the striker to have his shot on the volley, from inside the area, palmed away by John Crawley and scrambled to safety.

It was to be one of many fine saves by Crawley, whose reflexes were fully tested by the shoot-on-sight Bankstown attacking machine. Bankstown almost drew level in the 33rd when a lob from Anthony Kanaan came back off the post, after a Fred Umlil and Robert Angievski build-up had sent the defender into a scoring position.

The equaliser came in the 47th when Leo Carle pushed forward from half way and with an exchange of passes involving Paul Wearne and Angievski managed to put Colin Luff through to face Crawley. A striker with Luff's authority had not trouble finding the roof of an empty net, once he had drawn the keeper. There were many more second half chances for the Lions, but all too often the shots were offered from too far out and Crawley's task was made easier.

David Reid: Will fire the Demons to the Grand Final.

er or the efforts were marginally wide or, importantly, the keeper got his body in the way. The Demons' defence certainly lived dangerously.

Then came the incident that turned the game back in Blacktown's favour.

Steve Riches, coming on for the tireless Ben Willard, got away down the left and whisked a cross over from the byline. The keeper flailed at it at his near post and pushed the ball away but only to the edge of the area and then followed it out in a vain attempt to clear it a second time.

The alert Jimmy Nikas got there first, however, lobbing the ball over the keeper and into an empty net, from 15 yards out. This was in the 74th, but Bankstown, who had worked so hard, seemed deflated and a desperation tackle by the keeper on Nikas in the 86th as the ex-Canterbury man ran onto a Kain Rastall ball from deep, resulted in the inevitable penalty.

Steve Riches had his first attempt blocked at the base of the left post, but was able to follow up and slam the ball home right away.

The win was a reward for persistence, but for Bankstown a bitter blow to their last hopes of a finals' berth and their win at all costs approach had almost paid dividends, but it was not quite enough on the night.

As Ljube Jancey said after the game, when the dust had settled, 'If you don't score goals you cannot win the game'.

Blacktown City Demons 3 (D Reid 19m J Nikas 74m S Riches 86m pen) Bankstown City Lions 1 (C Luff 47m)

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS: John Crawley, Dane Hokin, Ben Willard (Steve Riches 57), Damien Foxe, Paul Dee (Luciano Berbis 81), Mike Smith, Kain Rastall, Naoki Imaya, Jim Nikas, David Reid, Peter Sermanni

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS: Zlatko Joevski, Anthony Kanaan (Sefer Yildiz 76), Richard Lukic, Bryan Raeburn, Dong Ki-Kim, Robert Angievski, Paul Wearne, Damien Lukic (Leo Carle 46), Steven Dimitrievski (Alex Trpkoski 61), Freddy Umlil, Colin Luff

Cautions: Bryan Raeburn 19 (BCL), Dong Ki-Kim 20 (BCL), David Reid 40 (BCD), Richard Lukic 40 (BCL), Peter Sermanni 64 (BCD), Zlatko Joevski 86 (BCL)

Sent Off: Bryan Raeburn 86 (Straight red)

Referee: Greg Leverton

Assistant Referees: Robert Koffler and Jim Nicolaou

Fourth Official: Srebre Delovski

when the Tigers had beaten them 3-2 in the early match (luckily played in daylight!!) and then had to survive the embarrassment of the floodlight failures, not once, not twice but three times. Three times and out!! In this case it was three times and game over!!

Any way it was fun while it lasted!!

Coasties v Tigers: No result

CENTRAL COAST: Moore, Matthews, Daley, McKendrick, Peatey, Metcalf, Williams, Freeman, Haynes, Ritchie, Clark

LEICHARDT: Crews, Moric, Livingstone, Galluzzo, Stubbs-Mills, Karavataki, La Rocca, Brown, Jones, Tesoro, Poimer

REFEREE: Boyd McGregor

ASSISTANT REFEREES: Darren Sprod, David Moore

FOURTH OFFICIAL: Mark Richardson



NSW Premier League



Sutherland Sharks

2

Bonnyrigg WE

2

By Greg Stock

The Sutherland Sharks may not have taken many scalps this season, but last Saturday night they came awfully close. An 89th minute equaliser from Sharks midfielder Simon Miller may not have been one of the best goals seen all year, but in the overall scheme of the White Eagles Premiership campaign, it may yet prove to be the most decisive.

While Bonnyrigg did have the better of the game, a lot can be said for the fighting spirit of the home side.

With Adam Kurtz stopping almost everything the White Eagles forwards could throw at him, the Sharks defence that had so often been their Achilles heel, stood up and were counted. Peter Feehan, Alen Stajcic and Ben Short did their job, and did it well, to keep the normally hostile visitors forward line in check.



Adam Kurtz: Sutherland's gifted shot stopper.

**Sutherland Sharks 2 (Karanasos 11
Miller 89) Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2
(Tomasevic 13 46)**

Sutherland Sharks: Adam Kurtz, Peter Feehan, Alen Stajcic, Ben Short, Jamie Danaskos (Monte Pfrengle 61), Alex Pfrengle (Carlo Musumeci 85), Kris Karanasos, Simon Miller, Colin McAusland (Marino Musumeci 77), Ben Kaznik, Sam LaMacchia

Bonnyrigg White Eagles: Ivan Necevski, Devrim Huseyin, Sasha Utjesenovic, Bobby Draga, Tayfun Devrimol, Michael West, Johnny Ghiso (Todd Macrae 77), John Kyriazopoulos, Vuko Tomasevic, Jimmy Aschner, Robbie Gomez (Peter Cklamovski 86)
Cautions: Monte Pfrengle
Sent Off: Monte Pfrengle

Referee: Mark Hester

Assistant Referees: Peter Apostolovski and Heidi Breeze
Fourth Official: Michael Collins



Parramatta Eagles

2

Penrith Panthers

1

By Paul Goodwin

Few of those present at Melita Stadium on Sunday night expected Parramatta Eagles' game with Penrith Panthers to be anything other than a cakewalk for the home side, given that the competition leaders were facing a side that had not won a game since the opening day of the season.

They may therefore have been shocked when Penrith took the lead in the 7th minute and despite being 2-1 down at half time continued to pose a threat for the full 90 minutes as their determined players battled away until they dropped and could easily have snatched a point right up until the final whistle.

Jason Sciberras, the most impressive player in the Panthers' side and the subject of interest from the scouts, made a great run from deep and threaded the ball in behind the Eagles' defence for Rod Hutchinson to go on and beat

Jason Holmes with a crisp finish, giving the visitors a very early advantage.

That lead did not last long, however, as a bad blunder by Luke Boyd in the 18th minute allowed Malcolm Meilak to gain possession and punish the Panthers with a cracking shot from close range.

Boyd made few mistakes after that and along with the brilliant Sciberras, the cool and detached Luke O'Connell and industrious Marty McCaffery contributed to an effort that deserved better than a narrow loss, in truth, as this may well have been the best his side had played all season.

Chances came regularly for both sides in this game and among them Glenn Sprod finding the post, Daniel Cummins missing a sitter from a Jim Bakis cross and Jason Holmes having to race off his line to deny Hutchinson who had got in behind the Parramatta

defence to face the keeper and was well placed to score.
The first half was extended by three minutes and it was in the last 15 seconds of this period that

Parramatta gained the lead, a lead they were not to relinquish.

A fierce shot from Jim Bakis at the edge of the area was blocked on the line by Daniel Wells and when the ball came back Geoff Dwyer smashed the rebound into the roof of the net.

The second half saw both sides again on the hunt for goals and spectators were treated to a tense and entertaining 45 minutes.

Anthony Mondello, who had come on late as a substitute, went close many times for the Eagles, while Penrith continued to have chances and the best of these may have been a run from Sciberras in the 77th when the gifted player got to the byline and sent the ball over, low, only for it to elude players from both sides when a chance was very much on.

Good football on an uneven surface was not easy for either side and Penrith's running game was well suited to the pitch conditions, a running game that brought the most bizarre offside decision in some time it should be pointed out.

Sciberras had made a sensational run down the left in the 38th, a dribble from well inside his own half to get past the entire defence and go in search of a goal on his solo run, but, inexplicably, the offside flag was up, much to the relief of the home side that could well have been down a second goal before the break had the run of Sciberras continued to the edge of the penalty area.

Parramatta now look secure as premiers, but with two games to go perhaps Penrith can make life very hard for their remaining opponents on this performance.



Glenn Sprod (left) in his NSL days.

Parramatta 2 (G Dwyer, M Meilak)
Penrith 1 (R Hutchinson)

PARRAMATTA EAGLES: Jason Holmes, Malcolm Meilak, Mark Reveley, Mirko Jurilj, Ben Delicata, Daniel Kukucka, (Geoff Dwyer 77), Jim Bakis (Tony Mittiga 90), Paul O'Grady, Glenn Sprod (Mauricio Islas 88), Ben Delicata, Daniel Cummins

PENRITH PANTHERS: Chad Taylor, Chris Giometti, Dave Gardiner (Glenn Meilak 54), Paul Marosevic (Danny Hinton 13), Daniel Wells, Rod Hutchinson, Luke O'Connell, Jason Sciberras, Tim O'Connell, Marty McCaffery, Luke Boyd (Caetano Lima 54)

Cautions: Marty McCaffery 23 (PP), Daniel Kukucka 28 (PE), Malcolm Meilak 70 (PE)

Referee: Vic Gauci

Assistant Referees: Peter Verinder and Adrian Tamplin

Fourth Official: Terry Goodhew



C'bury-M'ville St George Saints

0

1

By Robbie Bartolillo

In an uninspiring match, the Saints defeated their Canterbury rivals 1-0 at Henson Park on Saturday night. Captain Angelo Petratos secured the victory with a late goal, vindicating coach Manny Spanoudakis confidence in his attacking credentials.

The opening ten minutes pointed to a thrilling contest, the Saints potentially lethal combination of Beddoni and Petratos causing havoc for the Berries defence. In particular, Archie Markopoulos was dynamic on the flanks, his elusive running a perfect condiment for midfielder Nabil Codmanis creativity.

The Berries relied heavily on Yane Talcevski, his vision and silky footwork complimenting Doumanis incisive running, and Paradisis tenaciousness. Their first real scoring chance arrived in the 40th, when greyhound Kotsopoulos was

denied from close range.

Although pride and three competition points were at stake, the war of attrition which was transpiring desperately needed a goal. The Berries answer was 18 year old Marcelo Guerrero, his half time injection accommodating for an expansive, free flowing contest. This enabled Berries superb long-range exponent Talcevski more space, highlighted with his outrageous volley in the 67th.

Meanwhile, the Saints proved impenetrable in defence, most notably Sal Zullo who displayed constant composure. Beddoni remained a source of attacking danger, highlighting his sense of opportunism, pouncing on any Berries defensive error.

Eventually a goal did arrive, Petratos punishing an edge of the box foul, with his powerful, low trajectory free kick. Finally the crowd in attendance had something to cheer, especially the travelling Saints faithful.

At the end of the match Laki Konistis was a deflated figure, whilst in comparison, Saints Coach Manny Spanoudakis was extremely pleased.

"We set out to play as professional and disciplined as possible. From that perspective, 1-0 is as good as a 5-0 result. Especially as it takes away from the bottom two."

Canterbury-Marrickville 0
St George Saints 1 (Petratos 72)
Saints: Alogdellis, Bariamis, Petratos, Sevares, Maglis, Beddoni (Chahine 85), Markopoulos, Codmani (Verrender 70), Zullo, Damjanovic, Campbell

Berries: Bihari, Collins, Paradisis, Talcevski, Doumanis, Alemic, Kotsopoulos, Pillemer, Markopoulos (Fotiadis 77), Salim (Guerrero 45), Kladis (Uccino 11)

Cautions: Salim 17, Damjanovic 87

Referee: N. Asargiotis

Asst. Ref: A. Kay, L. Carlucci

Fourth Official: J. Barnes



Yane Talcevski: Olympic's midfield maestro.



NSW Premier League



FINAL FOCUS

Blacktown City's Finals Aspirations

by Robbie Bartolillo

The NSW Premier League finals are looming, and a clearer indication of the participating teams is transpiring.

Parramatta, Bonnyrigg and Leichhardt are basically assured a spot, whilst Blacktown City, Fairfield and Belconnen are entangled in a battle for the last two remaining positions.

With just two rounds left, the hugely underrated Bulls have exceeded most pundits expectations, maintaining fifth spot, a point clear of last year's Premiers, Blacktown City (at the time of writing). But the Demons recent results, in particular the round 19 tenacious defeat of Bonnyrigg, suggest they have the necessary credentials to atone for last year's Grand Final disappointment. Just ask stalwart defender, and Gabbie Stadiums unsung ace, Ben Willard.

Now in his second season with

the Demons, the veteran of three finals series (although only 24) affirms two clubs specifically, as teams to beat.

"Obviously Parramatta, I think they'll win the Premiership. The danger team for me, which is a bit of a smoky, is Fairfield. They are very strong up front, and very strong at the back."

Due mainly to 16 goal hero Marc Hoenselaars, and key defenders Matthew Dihm and Tom Marie, the Bulls are certainly notable contenders. Accordingly, Willard believes the wealth of Premier League talent points to an enthralling finals series.

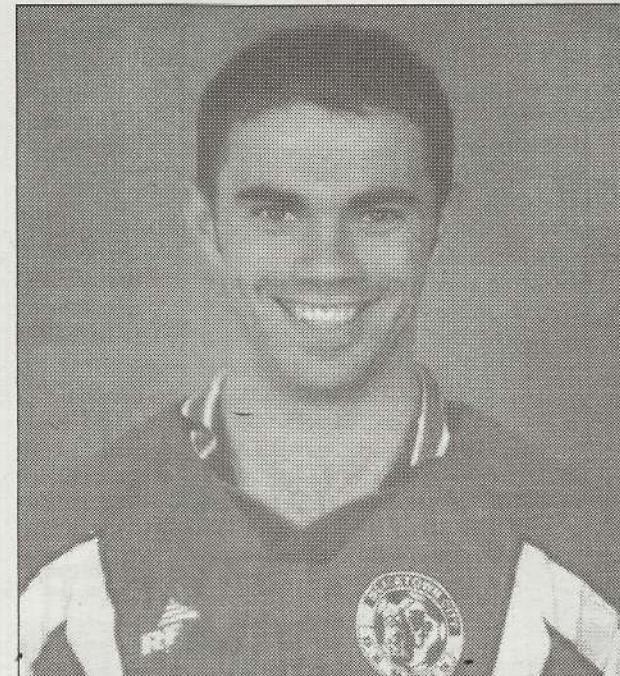
"Vuko Tomasevic is probably the best player I've played against for a little while in this league. Also there's Jim Bakis who has been playing well, along with Leichhardt's Derek Poimer, who I played with a couple of years ago."

As he explains: "The whole set up, Browny (Coach Brian Brown) included, the coaching staff are really professional, all the way through to the administration. I played with Olympic previously and the club structure here and set up, is second to none."

In a playing environment conducive to footballing excellence and concentration, it is of little wonder the Demons are bracing themselves for a momentous onslaught.

"The team spirit, it's been building up; it's sought of getting to a crescendo now."

The boys all enjoy a beer and a night out together. The team spirit



Ben Willard

is at a pretty high point."

Although plagued by injuries throughout the season, the Demons charge is now taking shape, their run not too dissimilar to a Melbourne Cup winning horse. Consequently, Willard identifies three players in particular, who can potentially get them to the winning post.

"Naoki Imaya, David Reid and Jimmy Nikas. If those three can get running at players, other teams are going to find them very hard to stop."

Yet the Demons finals involvement is no certainty, a fact Willard is fully aware of.

"I'll worry about that when we get there (finals). Next week we play Penrith. Mate, we're at home, we're starting to get some form together. Hopefully we can get another three points and get a roll on for the semis."

Stewart Van Bentum and the Fairfield Bulls by Claire Killeen

The finals are heading the way of the New South Wales Premier League contenders with pace and they will not forgive those who are not ready.

In a season of competition that has been quite tight and with three weeks to go in the competition the Top Five still has not been cemented.

Yet, the new boys of the competition, the Fairfield Bulls are gaining momentum going into the finals and are positioned just inside the Top Five heading into Round 20.

The Bulls are the quiet achievers- a tag that may help them as they enter into next months finals. One man, whose experience will benefit the Bulls, is key player, Stewart Van Bentum.

Van Bentum last year played with grand final winners, Bonnyrigg White Eagles yet he



believes this year's finals contest will be extremely tight.

"All five teams are going to have a chance of winning [the grand final]. Anyone in the Top Five could make it into the final and win it on their day," the 26-year-old said.

With teams of such high calibre in the Top Five, Van Bentum says there is not one team who the Bulls need to look out for, instead they will need to be cautious of all teams, "I couldn't pick one team Parramatta, Bonnyrigg and Blacktown are all strong."

"Blacktown have beaten us twice on two occasions [this season] but we have the potential to beat them or any other team that makes the five," says Van Bentum.

For a season, where Van Bentum believes he and his team have not reached their full potential, it is certainly an ominous sign for the other

sides.

"It [The season] has been good, quite strong. We have learnt a lot as a team as a new club coming into the premier league."

"There is a lot to improve on. Everyone is working towards the finals."

"[On his own game] Its gotten stronger towards the finals. It started a bit slow [because] the last six seasons I have played back to back without a break and when we began I wasn't consistent," Van Bentum said.

For the Bulls and Van Bentum the aim is simple: To win.

Yet in a competition as strong as this season that will be hard to achieve and will take good performances every week throughout the finals month.



NSW Premier League

SCOREBOARD

ROUND 20

PREMIER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

C'BURY M'VILLE	0	ST GEORGE SAINTS	1
BELCONNEN BD	4	(E Petratos)	
(M Perinovic x 2, D Macor x 2)		FAIRFIELD BULLS	4
CENTRAL COAST	P	(M Hoenselaars x 2, own goal, J Connolly)	
SUTHERLAND SHARKS ..	2	LEICHHARDT TIGERS	P
(K Karanasos, S Miller)		BONNYRIGG WE	2
BLACKTOWN CITY	3	(V Tomasevic x 2)	
(D Reid, J Nikas, S Riches)		BANKSTOWN CITY	1
PARRAMATTA EAGLES ..	2	(C Luff)	
(G Dwyer, M Meilak)		PENRITH PANTHERS	1
		(R Hutchinson)	

UNDER 19

C'BURY M'VILLE	1	ST GEORGE SAINTS	3
BELCONNEN BD	3	FAIRFIELD BULLS	2
CENTRAL COAST	2	LEICHHARDT TIGERS	3
SUTHERLAND SHARKS ..	3	BONNYRIGG WE	3
BLACKTOWN CITY	9	BANKSTOWN CITY	0
PARRAMATTA EAGLES ..	3	PENRITH PANTHERS	2

TABLES

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	20	15	1	4	58	23	46
Bonnyrigg WE	20	13	2	5	48	21	41
Blacktown City Demons	20	11	5	4	47	26	38
Leichhardt Tigers	19	11	4	4	37	27	37
Fairfield Bulls	20	11	4	5	47	40	37
Belconnen Blue Devils	20	11	3	6	42	31	36
Bankstown City Lions	20	8	5	7	40	45	29
Canterbury Marrickville	20	5	3	12	22	37	18
Central Coast Coasties	19	4	5	10	21	34	17
St George Saints	20	4	4	12	27	50	16
Penrith Panthers	20	1	8	11	22	40	11
Sutherland Sharks	20	1	4	15	21	58	7

UNDER 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leichhardt Tigers	20	14	2	4	46	16	44
Central Coast Coasties	20	13	3	4	50	18	42
Blacktown City Demons	20	13	1	6	51	26	40
Parramatta Eagles	20	12	4	4	38	25	40
Fairfield Bulls	20	10	4	6	43	31	34
Belconnen Blue Devils	20	9	4	7	47	42	31
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	20	8	3	9	39	37	27
Penrith Panthers	20	6	4	10	29	37	22
Canterbury Marrickville	20	5	4	11	20	35	19
St George Saints	20	5	4	11	23	42	19
Sutherland Sharks	20	3	3	14	33	61	12
Bankstown City Lions	20	3	2	15	15	64	11

TOP SCORERS

- 18 Jimmy Aschner (BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES)
- 18 Marc Hoenselaars (FAIRFIELD BULLS)
- 17 Daniel Macor (BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS)
- 16 Jim Bakis (PARRAMATTA EAGLES)

Central Coast in Action



Adam Peatey



Damien Smith



Darren Moore



Mick Williams



NSW Premier League



COERVER® COACHING SOCCER CLINICS

"World's No.1 Soccer Program"



"This special Goalkeeping program aims to improve players' athleticism, technique and tactical awareness as well as being fun and enjoyable."



Players Receive:

- 12 hours Instruction
- Adidas Soccer Ball
- Adidas T-Shirt
- Certificate
- Drinks

\$125

APRIL SCHOOL HOLIDAY

15th - 18th 22nd-25th limited places



Venue:

"Valentine Sports Park, Glenwood"

(15th-18th) OR

"Summer Hayes Park, Springwood"

(22th-25th)

Boys and Girls aged 8-14 years

To enroll contact:-

COERVER® COACHING (02) 9629 1800



COERVER® COACHING

"World's No.1 Soccer Program"



"Learn the moves used by the world's greatest players. Our qualified and experienced staff will demonstrate step by step how it's all done"



Players Receive:

- 12 hours Instruction
- Adidas Soccer Ball
- Adidas T-Shirt
- Certificate
- Drink

\$125

APRIL SCHOOL HOLIDAY

Week (15-18th) (22-25th) limited Places



Venue:

"The Headquarters for Soccer in NSW"

NSW Soccer Federation

Valentine Sports Park, Glenwood

Boys and Girls aged 5-14 years

To enroll contact:-

COERVER® COACHING (02) 9629 1800

MANCHESTER UNITED • LEEDS ARSENAL • LIVERPOOL

These are just some of the top teams using SAQ Coaching Programmes for their senior pros as well as youth development



www.saquaustralia.com

Email: info@saquaustralia.com

AUSTRALIA-WIDE LAUNCH

The driving force behind SAQ is Britain's Alan Pearson.

Come train with him - or just watch - and see how SAQ offers unique player development benefits. SAQ develops players, coaches and teams to new levels.

Alan Pearson and SAQ Australia are introducing SAQ programmes this March and April. Australia-wide schedule details are on www.saquaustralia.com



Official Clothing
Supplier to NSW
Soccer Federation.

GOLSPORT

PREMIER SUPPLIER TO SOCCER
IN AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

GOL6 3/02

THE MORE THE MERRIER IN A MILLION DOLLAR NSL



By Bert van Bedaf

This season's NSL has yet to play its grand final, but speculation as to the composition of next season's competition is rife.

Former Carlton SC general manager Lou Sticca has released a blueprint for a future NSL, called *The Way Forward*. He spoke with Victorian Editor Bert van Bedaf.

A part from the uncertainty, the constant changing is undermining the media credibility of the National Soccer League. Will it be 14, 13, 12 or 10 teams next seasons?

According to Soccer Australia commissioner in Victoria, Joe Brondolino, there won't be a 10-team league. Sticking with this year's 13-team league would be depressing and cannot be contemplated. The bye it creates is an abomination, the Frankenstein of competition.

There may be 12 or better still 14 clubs. Many believe 14 is the ideal number, giving a solid season of 26 rounds plus finals.

It is also not clear whether all existing NSL clubs will be included next time (in a 14-team league).

Struggling Sydney United and bottom team New Zealand's Football Kingz are no certainties. It is well established, there's not an NSL club that's making money, but some are worse off than others. The axe might fall on some.

Furthermore, there are consortiums waiting in the wings. Soccer Australia has received several submissions, including one from Melbourne.

A Chinese consortium wants to establish a club called the Melbourne Dragons. The consortium includes major interests, among them the Shanghai FC, that have recently tried to get into the NSL by mounting (failed) bids buying up Victorian Premier League club Bentleigh Greens and taking a share in NSL club Melbourne Knights. The Knights deal might yet come to fruition.

The Knights also are contemplating selling their home ground in Sunshine and relocating. The reformation of the Knights to become Melbourne United is also a possibility.

The persistent Brisbane Lions are the third applicant.

There's another formation afoot, called Melbourne Colonials, in which

former Carlton Soccer Club general manager Lou Sticca is involved. Sticca said the Colonials were "nothing more than a concept", but it had "the support of Brondolino and Victorian Soccer

Federation chairman Manny Galanos".

"There are people who are serious about investing in a club (but only) until Soccer Australia shows some solidarity and continuity," he said.

A former committee member at defunct NSL club Melbourne Zebras (formerly Brunswick United Juventus), Sticca became the founding manager of Carlton in 1997. He left the club before it collapsed last year.

Now a player agent and owner of website tribalfootball.com, Sticca has formulated an NSL blueprint together with Sydney player agent Chris Tanner and soccer statistics man Alan Clark, who markets software sports packages to organisations and federations around Australia.

Sticca and partners emphasise they're not suggesting a break-away league. "We're suggesting the NSL looks at this format. This is not a new league. No-one's ever done that," Sticca said.

They advocate a national league of 18 tightly monitored and managed,

franchised clubs, built around the existing NSL and organised along the lines of the USA's National Football League and the Australian Football League, and run by an independent commission, divorced from Soccer Australia.

Their plan calls for a roster of 20 players (down from the present squads of 23) and a salary cap of \$1 million. Currently, there is no salary cap at NSL level. The Victorian Premier League was capped at \$85,000 for the first time last season.

They suggest a regionalised structure with the opportunity for NSL promotion and relegation and the introduction of a national Cup competition similar to the English FA Cup.

Their enlarged NSL would have 34 rounds, starting in August 2003 and finals in May the following year. Clubs would pay \$100,000 affiliation fee (up from the present \$60,000) and could be earning more than \$1 million in prize money.



Joe Brondolino: Soccer Australia Commissioner in Victoria believes a restructure in the league is needed immediately.



Lou Sticca: Former Carlton General Manager now player agent, owner of tribalfootball.com and a part of the Melbourne Colonial concept.

A team would be earning \$450,000 for finishing minor premier after the home and away rounds, another \$450,000 if it won the national championship and it could be picking up \$180,000 for winning the national cup, according to Sticca.

Prize money also would be distributed among the minor place getters, so that most clubs stood to gain financially from the NSL and Cup competitions. Other revenue would be earned from sponsorship, marketing, merchandising and television rights.

FROM "THE WAY FORWARD"

We believe that in 2003 a new league (and cup) should be launched. The league should consist of 18 teams.

In Australian sport, we often steer away from anything American including the term "franchise" but in fact, for a national competition to survive and prosper, franchising is THE ONLY WAY to go forward.

Clubs would be required to purchase a franchise from the nation-

The NSL as it is can't work when it is constantly chopping and changing. Every year we change format and teams. It needs stability," Lou Sticca.

Sticca said more clubs, more derbies, was far better than less and Melbourne desperately needed a third club despite the dramatic demise of Carlton (and Collingwood Warriors before it).

"We need more grassroots involvement, more passion, more local rivalry, more incentives and more stability (in the league)," Sticca said.

"The NSL as it is can't work when it is constantly chopping and changing. Every year we change format and teams. It needs stability," Sticca said.

He put Carlton's failure down to the second owners, who bought the club from the founders, including the Carlton Cricket and Social Club. Carlton failed because of the people who bought the club. They destroyed what was potentially very good," Sticca said.

Sticca believed there was plenty of room for optimism. "We're too busy being negative. I've been part of some catastrophic failures (Zebras and Carlton), but I'm more positive (about soccer) than I've ever been. Soccer is going to be the No.1 sport (in Australia). It's not a question of if, but when," Sticca said.

al body that would then give licence for that club to play in the competition.

This should be the only involvement the national body has in the administration of the competition.

An independent "commission style" body would run the national competition, similar to the AFL and America's NFL, NBA and NHL. The commission would design, maintain and apply the rules required to operate a franchise, including strict controls on expenditure, marketing, and football activity.

All clubs would pay an ongoing fee to cover their share of the shortfall between marketing income and marketing costs, so that a marketing pool could be used for effective advertising and promotion of the league and its clubs. No club can avoid their responsibilities in this area; it is a prerequisite for acceptance. All marketing would be organised and authorised by the commission and although clubs would not be discouraged from doing extra, it must still be approved by the commission, making sure that it doesn't fall outside of expenditure and

strategic boundaries.

Clubs would be limited to 20 players on the first team roster (as per the NSW Premier League) and would not be permitted to spend more than a certain amount (eg; \$1 million) on player wages. Performance bonuses and other benefits would be allowed, but under strict guidelines designed and monitored by the commission.

A uniform advertising and promotion strategy would be spread across all areas where the league was represented, and integrated into a strong marketing strategy, which would include a totally new electronic media presence. The league could own its own TV rights by buying some airtime itself.

The potential income is much greater if this is done this way, and the flexibility in an arrangement with a media partner is more possible.

The league should have 18 clubs with a roster limit of 20 players. A salary cap, and suggested staff structures. A variance in the salary cap limit is suggested, as we believe clubs who work hard off the field, should be allowed to reap some reward for it on the field.

Franchises	Current teams
Adelaide 1	Adelaide City Force
Adelaide 2
Brisbane 1	Brisbane Strikers
BRISBANE 2
Canberra
Illawarra	Wollongong Wolves
Melbourne 1	Melbourne Knights
Melbourne 2	South Melbourne
MELBOURNE 3
New Zealand	Kingz F.C.
Newcastle	Newcastle United
North Queensland
Perth 1	Perth Glory
PERTH 2
Sydney 1	Northern Spirit
Sydney 2	Sydney Olympic
Sydney 3	Parramatta Power
Sydney 4	Marconi Stallions, Sydney United

Win bonuses should be no more than 25% of the weekly wage.

Cutting clubs is not necessary, when you provide the enforced strategies for their survival. We also don't have to put players out of work.

With the loss of Carlton, Eastern Pride and Canberra Cosmos, around 100 jobs were lost in the game, with the majority of those being players. Some people would like us to cut another 100 jobs from the industry.

That is crazy and unnecessary.

All franchisees would be representatives from a region and would have certain responsibilities in coaching and development for that area.

Regionalisation has been discussed many times in the past as a way to identify the true "under structure" of soccer and the individual areas from where our players come from.

Each region could also be identified in a high profile way by inclusion in two key areas of the

national competition's operations.

1). A national cup competition where teams from the regions other leagues would be invited to join the national competition's 18 teams in an "FA Cup" style competition. This may be by invitation or qualification based on local standings, or by competition through earlier qualifying rounds.

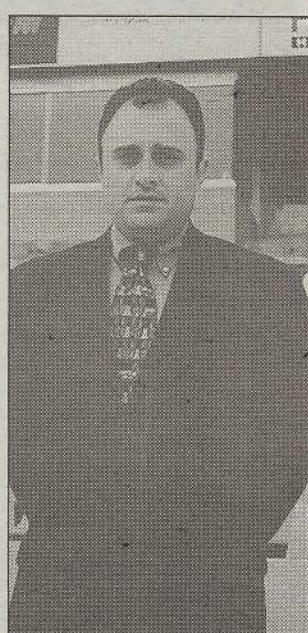
2). Promotion and relegation - teams finishing in the bottom three places on the national competition would need to requalify for the following season or be relegated. The qualification process could be by way of tournament or play-off and be open to any potential nominees from the "threatened club's" region, who have qualified as local league champions or something similar. Potential promotion aspirants MUST meet potential franchisee standards before they are allowed to contest a promotion playoff.

Should a club finish in the relegation zone, it would play off with the team or teams from its region who qualify for the playoffs by way of season finish and criteria assessment. Should a team fail to reach the standard for a new franchisee, that team shall not participate in the playoffs.

Their place is NOT passed onto the next best team who fit franchisee standards. A consideration for promotion is based on performance on AND off the park.

All NSL clubs up until now have had to pay an annual affiliation fee, in 2001/2002 approximately \$60,000 for the season. We would like to suggest that clubs affiliation fees would increase, say to \$100,000.

The affiliation fees collected would then go into a major prize pool. Other revenues, such as levies from gate takings, league sponsorship, television income, etc could be distributed amongst the stakeholders, providing a clearer, healthier picture for all. With a newfound "evenness" in the competition, clubs could prosper together, with the help of each other.



Lou Sticca: Believes in 2003, a new league should be launched.

PHOENIX DRAWS SHARKS INTO LATE NET



By Bert van Bedaf

Altona East Phoenix rose to the occasion, coming from behind to snatch a late equaliser against Port Melbourne Sharks, drawing 1-1 at Anderson Reserve last Friday night.

It was a game of one half. The first 45 minutes were a shocker. There were no shots on target. The 'keepers had little or nothing to do until Port Melbourne put some pressure on Altona East 'keeper Jamie Cooper in the last five minutes before the break.

Port's ace striker Peter Psarros is battling a dry spell and missed three half-chances in the first 30 minutes. Cameron Pino took a free kick and upcoming defender Jean Paul Knezevic shaded the crossbar with a towering header, among Port's failed attempts.

The Sharks might have deserved a penalty when Ross Antoniadis brought down Jasko Sehik just on half time, but referee Hakan Anaz waved play-on, leaving howls of spectator protests in his wake.

The game livened up in the second half. Psarros was on target with a header in the 56th minute from a cross by Serdar Pir, but Cooper was on the spot to palm it for a corner that was cleared.

Peter Tsolakis: Port Melbourne veteran scored a terrific free-kick to earn his side a valuation.

Jani Suric, among Phoenix's busiest players, had a shot earlier on that was saved by Port's second string 'keeper Damir Salkin, in the absence of injured Steve Wardle.

Former Green Gully's Nick Papadopoulos fired off a dangerous pass across the goalmouth, but there wasn't anyone at the end of it.

Port's Arthur Tsitsikas and Sam Poutakidis had attempts on goal, while Daniel Genovesi tried for Altona, but they were minor skirmishes. The real action began in the 77th minute.

Substitute Peter Tsolakis came on for his first senior game after a long lay-off with a groin injury. The veteran and former Port player-coach took a free kick, rolled on to him by Cameron Pino, and smashed it into the left corner through a forest of Phoenix defenders.

It should have been the winner, but is wasn't, and Cameron Pino could have scored the sealer



Serdar Pir: Port Melbourne Star had a solid game for the Sharks.

when chipping Cooper in the 85th minute. But the former Port 'keeper, denied him with a well-timed save.

It was the Phoenix that produced the stunner with two minutes left on the clock. A free kick was only half cleared and Steve Bartol drove it back into the pack, where Genovesi appeared to deflect it for the equaliser. Anaz noted it down as an own goal.

Tsolakis had a shot in time added-on but Cooper again did well to save, while a Cameron Pino header was not on target, leaving Port without a win at home since beating Heidelberg 6-3 in round three. East coach Chris Taylor was pleased with the outcome, considering he's still missing several senior players.

"It always good to come away with a point from Port Melbourne, because they're an excellent side. Taking a point off them is not bad," Taylor said.

"We tried to rough them up a bit in the first

half and that worked to our advantage. They put us under the pump in the second half, but I thought we had the better half-chances. We were in the game all the time," he said.

Nevertheless, once Port scored the contest could have been over for the Phoenix. It was only because the Sharks relaxed that Altona was able to get back into the game.

"After the goal Port set back a little and that helped us to get back into the game," Taylor said.

Port Melbourne coach Harry Chalkitis said he was "disappointed and frustrated".

"Cameron Pino should have made it 2-0 (missed chip) and the game would have been over. It's disappointing," Chalkitis said.

"In the first half, especially the first 20 minutes, we did well, but halfway we got frustrated and we allowed the opposition to get back into the game."

"When Jasko (Sehik) was brought down, the linesman should have seen it."

"Then we have some-one (Pir) booked and Altona scored from the Free kick. I wasn't happy with the refereeing. It cost us," he said.

The fact remained that lately Port Melbourne hasn't been able to break down oppositions at home and it has failed capitalise on opportunities.

"Altona had one chance and they scored from it. We had four of five good chances to seal the game, but it isn't happening at the moment," Chalkitis conceded.

Also on Friday, the Whittlesea Stallions continued their winning ways with a 1-0 victory over St Albans, while Altona Magic beat Preston 3-0 on Saturday night.



Action between Fitzroy City and Heidelberg United, the game ended at two-all.

(PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHEN GRAY)

Victorian Premier League 2002

ROUND 7

FRIDAY 22 MARCH 2002

Whittlesea Stallions

(Deniz Ekeri)

Port Melbourne Sharks

(Peter Tsolakis)

SATURDAY 23 MARCH 2002

Altona Magic

1 St. Albans Saints 0

1 Altona East Phoenix 1

3 Preston Lions 0

(Sush Berczynski, Zoran Todorovski, Sven Mrkic)

SUNDAY 24 MARCH 2002

Fitzroy City

(Bojan Jevdjordjević, Denis Vučinić)

Green Gully Cavaliers

2 Heidelberg United 2

(Peter Kokas, Nick Schmid)

0 Bentleigh Greens 0

MONDAY 25 MARCH 2002

Bulleen Zebras Vs Fawkner Blues

ROUND 8

MONDAY, 1 APR, 3:00 PM

Altona East Phoenix SC vs. Whittlesea Stallions SC

SUNDAY, 7 APR, 3:00 PM

Preston Lions SC vs. Port Melbourne Sharks SC

St Albans Saints SC vs. Fitzroy City SC

Heidelberg United SC vs. Bulleen Zebras SC

Bentleigh Greens SC vs. Altona Magic SC

Fawkner Blues SC vs. Green Gully Cavaliers SC

2002 Premier League Ladder – Round 7

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Green Gully Cavaliers	7	4	3	0	8	1	15
Bentleigh Greens	7	4	3	0	10	5	15
Port Melbourne Sharks	7	4	1	2	15	10	13
Whittlesea Stallions	7	3	3	1	10	9	12
Fawkner Blues	6	3	2	1	11	7	11
Altona East Phoenix	7	3	2	2	8	9	11
Fitzroy City	7	2	2	3	7	8	8
Altona Magic	7	2	1	4	13	10	7
Preston Lions	7	2	1	4	8	11	7
St. Albans Saints	7	2	1	4	5	9	7
Heidelberg United	7	0	3	4	12	24	3
Bulleen Zebras	6	0	2	4	6	10	2

Race On for South GM Job

By Bert van Bedaf

THE RACE for a new general manager at South Melbourne is ready to go as soon as the club knows what it wants.

Retiring South president George Vasilopoulos said the club would be appointing a new general manager in time for next season, but there's no rush to fill the vacancy in the next few weeks.

After the departure of Damien Phillips several weeks ago, the national soccer league club has been without a general manager, but the club won't be advertising the position. Rather, it will headhunt a suitable successor, Vasilopoulos said.

"We are definitely looking into the matter (of appointing a general manager). It may not happen by the end of the season, which is only a few games," Vasilopoulos said.

"We are currently reviewing the whole situation, the (club) administration, the office, the board and the club's constitution." We'll have a report in three weeks' time, but the next few weeks is important

to the team on the park (in finals contention), so everything is being put in the team.

"The administration is currently under review and once we know what we want and who is the right person that will be recommended to the board," he said.

Vasilopoulos made it clear likely candidates would be privately approached. "We know what we want here. If we put an advertisement in the paper, we get a lot of people who are just a waste of time. We'll go and headhunt somebody for the job," he said.

One person seeking the position is former South board member and a member of the New South group, Phil Diamataris.

Also connected with Victorian Premier League club Port Melbourne Sharks, Diamataris recently made up with Vasilopoulos after a bruising election campaign last year.

New South unsuccessfully stood against Vasilopoulos and his backers, but at the club's recent annual general meeting, the group did get some indication Vasilopoulos would probably step down in the near future, perhaps at the end of the season.

Diamataris wants to be general manager and part of the club's post-review plans of the future. "Of course, I want the job," Diamataris said.

Vasilopoulos suggested Diamataris subjected himself to the due processes. "Phil knows a lot of people at the club. And if he's been recommended, the board will discuss it," Vasilopoulos said.

Silic adds backbone to midfield

By Bert van Bedaf

When beating co-VPL rookie Fitzroy City 2-1 in round six last week, Whittlesea Stallions included midfielder Mark Silic for the first time since round one, having served his four-game suspension from last season.

"Mark got a full game. I left him on the field. He's such a good player," Stubbins said.

There's no doubt Silic's credentials, having played in the NSL with the Melbourne Knights and Sydney United as well as overseas.

He is the backbone to Whittlesea's midfield and his talents might just get the Stallions into the VPL finals in their inaugural season. A St Albans player last season, Silic copped a four-week suspension after a fracas involving

Saints and Altona East players. He was on the bench at the time as assistant coach.

Silic had gone to Germany in the meantime, but his alleged involvement was later found proved by the

club.

Missing Mark Silic has cost us at least four or five points. Getting him back (on the pitch) is the most important thing," Whittlesea president Sam Cuteri said.

"Not having him in the side was a massive blow to us," coach Phil Stubbins said.

"We'll surprise a few people," a determined Silic said.

Steve O'Connor: "I love developing youth players at the AIS"

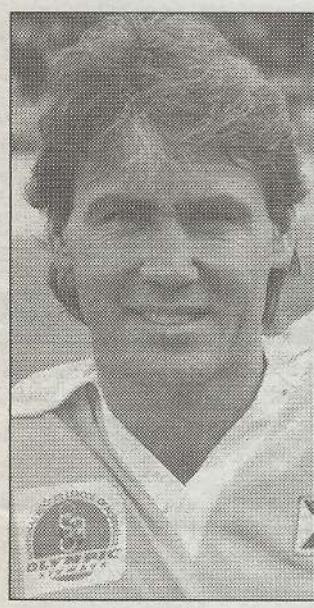


AUSTRALIAN
INSTITUTE OF SPORT

By Mark Stavroulakis

Twelve years is the time in which AIS head coach Steve O'Connor has spent developing Australia's potential players into world class ones.

The former Socceroo who

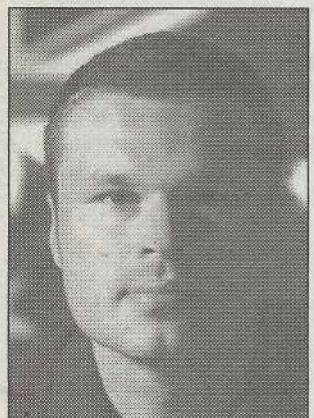


Steve O'Connor: The current AIS coach shown here in his early days at Sydney City.

wore the green and gold 44 times is one of the main instigators in Australian youth football today.

O'Connor has seen talent come and go, taking ordinary players and transforming them into international stars.

"Rocks" as he is known to his players kick-started his love for youth coaching in the year '89, where it was there,



Mark Viduka: One of the finest graduates ever to come from the AIS.

Steve was first introduced to the AIS program. "Head AIS coach at that time, Ronny Smith called upon all ex Socceroo players to take part

in some coaching courses down at the AIS.

You had John Kosmina, David Ratcliffe and the late Joe Watson, some of the many former stars taking part in what was to be a beneficial program for us in the future.

The course was about development of players, something I was really keen on as the thought of changing a good player, into a world-class player really excited me. Soon after the course was finished, Gary Cole (Assistant to Ron Smith at that time) left his post.

Smith called me up and said if I was interested in becoming the next assistant coach, I jumped at the chance and joined the AIS in 1990".

The former Sydney City star spent four years as assistant coach of the AIS, and throughout that time was sent up to Sydney to conduct another Institute program, the NSW ITC. "I left the AIS for 18 months bound for Sydney in an aim to kick-start the NSW ITC program.

I was NSW Technical director at that time, and put on all knowledge I was taught by Ron into making another top Institute side.

News filtered through that Ronny decided to move on from the AIS in '96, I applied for the head-coaching position then and have been there ever since."

Throughout his 12 years at the AIS, O'Connor witnessed many memorable moments, but only a few stood out, which will surely live forever in the coach's mind. "There have been so many good AIS squads that have come through in my time; the '98 squad which consisted of Michael Ferrante, Grant Last, Michael Turnbull, Ivan Ergic, Ljubo Milicevic, Kevo Gulessarian, Matty Kemp, Josh Kennedy and the list goes on was a really successful side.

We had won both the '98 and '99 Premiership and Grand-Final, but more importantly, the squad played some brilliant football.

The '95' squad was also great, with the likes of Hayden Foxe, Steve Laybutt, Con Blatsis, Zeljko Susa, Danny Milosevic, Lucas Neil, Michael Garcia, Michael Curcija, the squad was phenomenal.

Our best result that year was when the team toured Argentina and played a select

U17 and U20's national squad. We beat them two-one, a huge achievement for the lads as the squad had only been together for a few months".

One such player to move on from the AIS, Mark Viduka, was described by O'Connor as one of the most dedicated

player they were when they first started here.

The program itself is a key tool to a youth player's survival in the big leagues overseas. Aspects like strength and speed tests, monitoring the players lifestyle i.e. their eating habits are all factors of a



AIS Team 1998: One of O'Connor's best sides at the AIS.

players he had seen go through the ranks at the Institute.

"Mark was a very dedicated player, there would be times where he'd always have a ball at his feet, in his room and in the common room.

Everywhere he went, he brought a ball with him. Other athletes were complaining that Mark made too much noise in his room, as he constantly kicked the ball against the walls, I had to confiscate it off him, that's how bad it was! But in the end, it showed that he had the will, drive and determination to make it as a top international player today. Apart from Mark, Marco Bresciano, Lucas Neil, Mile Sterjovski, Brett Emerton, Craig Moore and Josip Skoko to name a few, had the same will and determination to become star players in Europe. They all shared that same dream, and look where they are now, all playing in respective European leagues".

Many people seem to ask the question, what makes the AIS program so good?

"Rocks" explains that it's all about repetition. "First and foremost we select the best young players in Australia.

Many people seem to think that talent is all you need. That is very wrong, you can't just have talent, while the will and determination is not there.

Many AIS graduates who've come through the ranks have had more will, dedication and determination rather than the talent, but because they worked hard at their game, they transformed themselves into twice the

young player developing into a better one.

The main word is habits, we at the AIS have to get the boys into a habit of doing a specific thing over and over again, until all the information is locked up into the lad's mind. Keeping possession of the ball no matter where you are, keeping close touches and technique are also views we



Steve O'Connor:
Representing Australia as
the Assistant Coach in last
years U/17 and U/20 National
team.

concentrate on. When you spend 48 weeks of the year, training and teaching the boys new things about this game, your always going to expect the results."

Apart from his head role as being coach of the AIS, O'Connor was selected as assistant coach to Ange Postecoglou in last years U17 and U20 sides.

"It was a tremendous experience being apart of a national team setup. It was a life-long dream of mine to get

involved at national level as that is the next step from an AIS coach's point of view.

Both squads featured a number of AIS graduates, something we at the Institute strive to do every year. We went quite well in both World Cups however lacked that match experience. An example would be in the U17's we played against Brazil, a country that prior to our meeting had played an unbelievable 40 odd matches. We had played in the Oceania qualifiers and had a few friendly games, but nothing of that amount. At the end of the day, that's what beat us, the lack of match practice with tougher squads. Overall, we've proved in the past and present that we have the youth players to match it with the overseas ones, there's no huge difference, our boys are just as good."

The current AIS squad, who were only recently assembled, will face a long tough season, but O'Connor believes this squad has what it takes to become a top class side. "It's going to take some time to develop them as some players pick up things quicker than others.

What you have to realize is I as a coach have to change their habits in their games. Something that is quite hard to do, as these boys have been playing the way they wanted to, for the past 16-17 years. Our aims at the AIS are to develop them, winning titles is not the be all end all result, however we have fared in almost every National Youth League final series for the past 10 years.

This season sees two important tournaments the lads will be introduced to. One is the up and coming Gardisca tournament in Italy where we are billed against giant South

American and European squads. At this stage we are looking at leaving in the second week of April, no doubt a priceless event for the players to be apart of. Then in July, we are off to England and Northern Ireland, for the famous Milk Cup. These next few months will be very crucial to these young boys progression to the top, however I have faith that they can do really well and go on to become quality stars in the future."

Finally, what has really made "Rocks'" determination to stay on?, after all these



Ron Smith: Worked with O'Connor whilst at the AIS.

years of developing players, some people seem to wonder how does O'Connor do it? "Put it this way, when I'm out in the field coaching and talking to the lads, I feel free. I forget about everything in life and concentrate on something I really love, and that's developing youngsters. The enjoyment I get seeing the young lads progress to the next level is unexplainable. Football runs through my blood," concluded the AIS maestro.



The new breed: Current AIS Squad.

Canberra Deakin Look the Goods in ACT's Federation Cup

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Deakin gained an early season advantage in the battle of the giants from last year's ACT Premiership when they beat Gungahlin Juventus 5-2 in a rescheduled group match in the Federation Cup.

The margin of the win was a shock for most Canberra soccer watchers. Deakin had won last year's minor premiership, only to be beaten by Juventus in the grand final and most believed the contest for honours would be between these old rivals again.

Deakin dominated the first half and two goals by

midfielder Andy Rakic contributed towards their 3-0 half-time lead.

Juventus threatened to make the match interesting as first Steve Lazzari and then George Cattanach clawed goals back, but two late strikes made the game safe for Deakin. They are now assured of a place in the knockout stage along with the newly emerging strongmen of the competition, Capital City Suns, Canberra Olympic's State League side and the University of Canberra.

In the other deferred game Monaro beat ANU's State League Division 3 side 4-1 to move into second place in the group threatening Juventus with early elimination.

FEDERATION CUP

Group 1

Pts	P	F	A
Canberra Deakin	2	8	2
Monaro	2	4	4
G'l Juve	2	2	5
ANU (3)	2	1	4

Group 2

Capital C. Suns	2	15	2
O'Connor Knights	2	8	1
ANU (1)	2	2	5
S. Tablelands	2	1	18

Group 3

Olympic (1)	2	8	3
Belconnen Utd	2	11	3
Cooma	2	5	7
Burns Club	2	1	12

Group 4

Uni of Canberra	2	5	0
Tugger Utd	2	5	3
Canberra City	2	2	5
Canberra Oly.	2	1	5

Wollongong News

By Otto Bader



EXODUS PROPHECY — any successful soccer team can expect to lose some key players afterwards, always ready to foster better prospects, who can blame them?

Last year the Wolves lost top performers like Matthew Horsley, Scott Chipperfield, Sasha Petrovski, Robert Middleby, causing big problems for coach Ron Corry. Now once more rumours have it that more regulars are looking for improved earnings at other clubs. Negotiations are not completed as yet according to Wolves CEO Mike Crowe and nothing has eventuated so far.

Conditions and the make-up of the NSL format for 2002/2003 could change with Soccer Australia not having released their new criteria or mission statement, dealing with numbers of accepted clubs, requirements of financial stability, more or less clubs in the present 13 team competition. Obviously the "BYE" has to be eliminated.



George Souris: Wolves captain on the way out?

Players might be available, looking for a club to join, depending on the final set-up of the comp.

The Wolves coach and the Board are banking on youth, resigned to the fact it could take some years to come before another championship is within reach.

The fans hope that the established players decide to stay put like keeper Dean Anastasiadis who has made quite an impact in Wollongong with top performances. Also team captain George Souris - a well liked and respected senior coming to the autumn of his playing years, as well as regulars Alvin Ceccoli, Dino Mennillo, Paul Reid, Ben Blake whose contracts run out this season.

Striker Stuart Young — still under contract, considers other options which would be a sad loss for club and supporters who have accepted him as a respected performer and friend all soccer fans, always available to socialise with them. Some could see Stuart Young to take up a

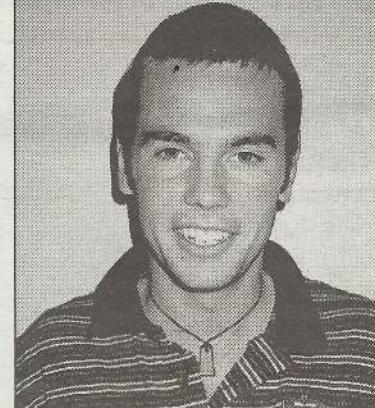


Stuart Young: The striker could take up a coaching role at the Wolves next year.

coaching position with the Wolves if he would lend his playing years in Wollongong. Time will tell if the cordial Englishman decides to remain at the Wolves.

Paul Reid — overseas trials have come to an end, results not as yet known. According to the Wolves Management Paul is on his way back to Australia, expected to return for the last home game at WIN Stadium against South

Melbourne. Coach Ron Corry could be looking to field the midfield player, forced due to several key players out with long-term injuries. Giant defender David



Paul Reid: The Wolves midfielder returning home for the last home fixture against South Melbourne after overseas trials.

Cervinski will be missing with a severe knee injury while sweeper Ben Blake is still troubled by an ankle injury, both not playing again in the remaining competition games. Youngsters are eager to claim a spot in first grade and in the win against Brisbane they have shown maturity above their years. Things are not that critical at the Wolves head quarters, even though the possible departure of experienced players will weaken the side, enough talented younger players are available to claim a place in the starting eleven.

On the management side, the club is stable, working on restructuring the organisation for an efficient run of proceedings, supported by an enthusiastic Board of Directors.

A big job lies ahead to work on winning over the reluctant fans, improvement in marketing, promoting the Wolves and soccer more with the local community.

Illawarra KO Final to Coniston Lions — in extra time a 'golden' goal scored by Coniston's Kris Yankulovski secured their win over Kembla Warra in hot weather at Ray Robinson Field, Fernhill. Corrimal Leagues Club is sponsoring the annual pre-season knock-out since 1962 - now in its 40th year, surely an Australian record.

The final was played with both teams

Francophone Cup launched in Canberra

By Graham Cooke

Soccer Canberra's campaign to integrate the National Capital's diplomatic corps into the local community by means of football took another step forward last week with the launch of the Francophone Cup.

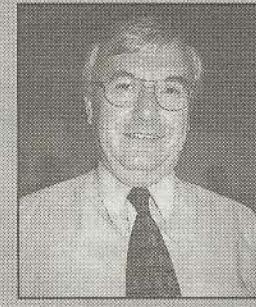
The cup, which will be competed for by the Soccer Canberra President's XI, two teams from the Diplomatic Corps and Woden Valley Masters, is part of a week of wider international events celebrating the achievements of the French-speaking world. One of those achievements, as members of the French Embassy were happy to point out, includes soccer, with France both World and European champions.

The Ambassador of Mauritius, Patrice Cure, said the cup would demonstrate the importance of soccer, which had

allowed French-speakers around the world to have a common bond, despite the diverse make-up of the many communities.

"Like the French team, the French world is both multicultural and successful and in that respect it mirrors the Australia where we are all happy to be," he said.

The initiative came from



Steve Doszpot - Soccer Canberra president promoting football among the city's diplomats.

Soccer Canberra president Steve Doszpot who has already promoted football among the city's diplomats with the two-year-old Friendship Cup series.

*Former Soccer captain John Warren resumes his long-running association with Canberra when he is the guest of the Belconnen Soccer Club at its McKellar complex tomorrow night. He will be promoting his book, 'Sheila, Wogs and Poofters.'

Warren was the first coach of Canberra City in the National Soccer League back in 1977 and for some years owned the well known Gold Creek restaurant and function centre in Gungahlin.

He has long been an advocate of a National Capital presence in the National League, and his views on the possibilities of Canberra climbing back from the current low point in its soccer fortunes will be eagerly awaited.

West Bellambi v Balgownie, youth Bellambi v Helensburgh, University v South Coast United, youth University v Shellharbour City. Kembla Warra v Helensburgh, youth Kembla Warra v South Coast United. Kiama v Northern United, youth Kiama v Dapto. Highlands v Lysaght, youth Highlands v Picton. Wollongong Olympic v Bulli, youth Wollongong Olympic v Warilla Wanderers. Albion Park WE v Picton, youth Albion Park WE v Fernhill. Dapto v Fernhill, youth Ruse v Northern United. Cringila v West Illawarra, youth Cringila v Lysaght.

All matches are being played at the home ground of the club named first in the draw.

Fraternity Cup Final — played at Wetherall Park, run by Port Kembla Soccer Club, sponsored by the Fraternity Club, finished with Balgownie 0:0 with Bulli in the final, Balgownie winning 5:4 in the penalty shoot-out. For 3rd place prize money Port Kembla won 3:2 over Coniston Lions. Sponsorship money was distributed \$2000.- for the winner, runner-up \$750.-, 3rd placed \$500.-, 4th placed \$250.-

Player Insurance — important to take notice, players need to phone NSW Federation on 96892311 if claims are made, quote Policy No. PMEL 00/0015035, club secretaries have a copy of the Lowe Lippman Bott booklet, ask for information if required.

Referees Fees for 2002 — clubs are up for new fees this year == in Premier League home games first grade \$100.-, Reserves \$45.-, Youth Grade \$50.-, Assistant or Linesmen (2) \$43.-, \$23.-, and \$25.- total \$377.-

In Conference League home games \$65.- first grade, \$40.- Reserves, \$45.- Youth Grade, Linesmen (2) \$32.-, \$20.-, \$22.- total \$298.-

Appointment officer this year is Mike Sheldon, phone 0439 953 068.

Referee Quiz — test your knowledge == the referee plays advantage, the ball has gone over the touch-line, he blows for a free kick instead of advantage within seconds. (right/wrong).

Under The Microscope with Frank Farina



This week, ABSW's editor Mark Stavroulakis caught up with Socceroo boss Frank Farina.

Having represented Australia as a player 70 times, also being one of the pioneers of early Australians playing overseas football, Farina is adamant that soccer has been his life.

After his playing career, Farina coached the Brisbane Strikers and in season 96-97, gained full glory in winning the Ericsson Cup, a first for any Brisbane side in the National League.

Soon after that, Frank was awarded a position as National team coach of Australia. Grabbing headlines for beating the likes of France and Brazil in the Confederations Cup last year, all was lost after Australia failed to qualify for the 2002 World Cup in Japan/Korea.

However, with a renewed 4-year contract, the 38 year old is a firm believer that come 2006, Australia should be in Germany for the World Cup, only time will tell.

MS: How long have you been involved as Socceroo coach and what has been your most memorable moment with the side?

FF: I've had the job since August '99 where it was then I

decided to be apart of something big. So far in my two and a bit years, I've had a few memorable moments, but the best would have to be the Confederations Cup held in Japan/Korea last year. Finishing third in a competition fielding the likes of Brazil, France, Cameroon and Japan was brilliant. The best aspect to come out of that tournament was our two priceless wins over France (1-0) in the group stages and Brazil (1-0) for third placing overall, it was brilliant.

MS: Soon after Australia failed to qualify for the 2002 World Cup, your contract was up. During that time, were there any approaches from other national teams or clubs?

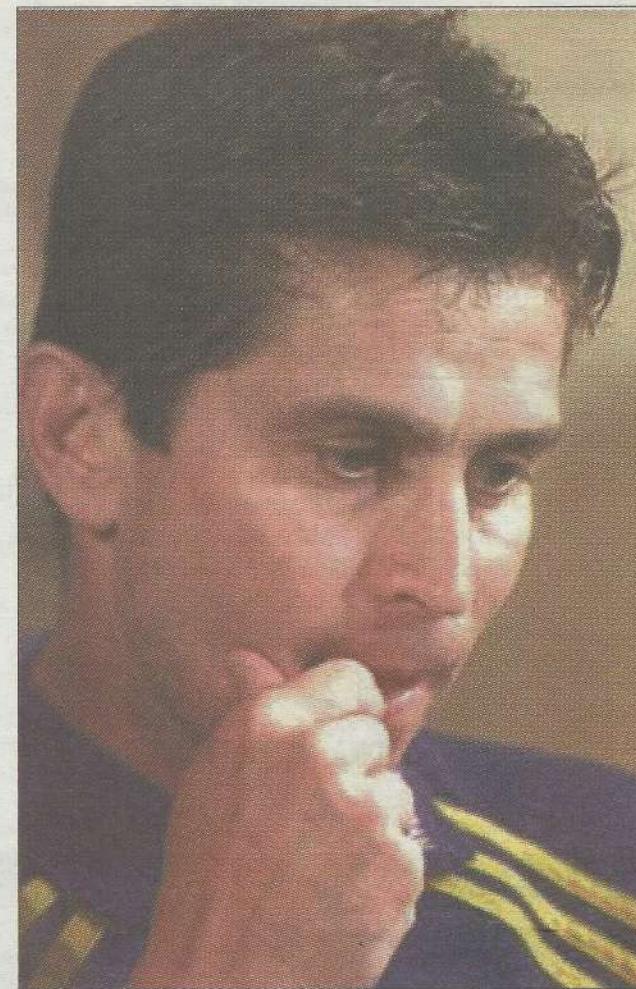
FF: Once my contract was up there were a few interests from various teams, however no discussions were made with any of them. I focused more on the Australian job, as at this stage, I want to go one better than last, and that's qualifying for the World Cup.

MS: What role does Les Scheinflug have in regards to the national teams of Australia?

FF: I don't know, the best person to ask that question would be Soccer Australia. For the past two years, he wasn't really involved in the Socceroo set-up.

MS: How do you base your selection process when dealing with a domestic and international based player for a Socceroos spot?

FF: There's no favoritism, it's whoever is the best player for the job. Geographics don't count, it's the players ability.



The face says it all, Farina's anguish on the failure to qualify for the World Cup this year.

At the end of the day, I want someone that will fight for their country and play to win. I always want to pick the best available players for my squads. So really there is no process, the better player wins their spot in the end.

MS: VSF Chairman Manny Galanos recently came out and said that he does not want to take part in your plan to have all future Socceroos, take part in their respective state leagues across Australia. What's your reaction towards that comment?

FF: I was really surprised

when I read that actually as it is something that I suggested for the benefit of the players. I want to implement an idea that will keep the squad fit during the off-season. The majority of the players selected will have at least 8 weeks off, what I want to do is keep them match fit and that was one of my ideas. At this stage I'm working on a few more, which will hopefully be announced in coming weeks.

MS: Are you a firm believer that the Socceroos should base themselves in Europe?

FF: What people don't seem to realize is that we've been based in Europe for the past two years. Sure we've had a couple of camps in Australia, but the majority of the games were played in Europe. When I first took the job, I based my schedule alongside the European calendar. Physically moving over there in my mind will not change a thing, as it will surely clash with the majority of clubs in Europe. I'm content with the way it went for the past two seasons, no doubt this time, we will be looking towards playing more games for match fitness as a team.

MS: How are the preparations for the Nations Cup in July going?

FF: Our main aim is to qual-

ify first, as we want to progress to the Confederations Cup. Qualifying for that tournament will mean facing better opposition, which will only benefit our chances of doing well in the lead up to the next World Cup qualifiers. At this stage, match practice is a must, as most players will have stopped their football by at least April 7th. The qualifiers will run from the 5th - 14th July in New Zealand. I really want to get at least two-three games under our belts before the tournament starts. First training camp as a squad will be announced two weeks prior to the event.

MS: You recently signed a 4-year deal as Australian coach, what will your aims be?

FF: First and foremost my main aim is to get Australia to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. Prior to that we have the Olympic games in Athens (2004), another huge event that hopefully we can go well at. Overall, also focusing on the development of players in the Socceroo squad. I've drawn up a blueprint for the next four years whereby all areas will be covered in fulfilling that final goal, qualification for the World Cup.

MS: Do you believe Oceania should get direct qualification to the World Cup?

FF: Logically yes, as we are apart of the Confederation. We are the only Confederation without direct passage to the World Cup, which I think is totally unfair.

People will argue that we have a weak competition to qualify in, however, in past years we have proved that we aren't an easy beat side. Getting direct access will also lift the profile of the game in Australia and Oceania immensely. Major sponsors will also come into place helping out any financial difficulties.

MS: How do you rate the Australian youth system in our country, and what do you think of the FIFA rule outlawing players under the age of 18, transferring to a European club?

FF: I think our youth system is top-notch, and it's quite evident its working well. 10-15 years ago, we had around two-three players playing overseas football, no one really regarded Australians as good soccer players. Come 2002, we have at least 140 guys playing in leagues across the world, an enormous achievement. As for the FIFA rule, I defiantly think it's a good law. It will strengthen the National League and give the players some chance to play 1st grade football for that much needed experience. However, there will always be ways around it, and unfortunately there will be no exception even if this rule has been put in place.

MS: Finally, who is your hot tip for the Grand-Final come end of National League season?

FF: I believe the team who will be tough to beat are current Premiers Perth Glory. I think they have what it takes to take out the Grand-Final.



Frank Farina shown coaching the recent Socceroos squad.



During his playing days, Farina and Argentinian star Diego Simeone fight for the ball.

National Youth League

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE 2001-2002

NORTHERN DIVISION

RESULTS RD 24

FRIDAY 22 MARCH 2002

Newcastle United Youth 2 ACTAS 2
(Majurovski 54', Davelaar 57')
(Hunt 55', Brunskill 90')

SATURDAY 23 MARCH 2002

Parramatta Power Youth 0 Sydney United Youth 2
(Cappuccio 52', 83')

QAS 3 Sydney United Colts 0
(Match Forfeited by Sydney United Colts)

Northern Spirit Youth 9 Brisbane Toro 0
(Dobbie 3' pen 27' pen 38' 68',
Fisher 10' 18', Foti 45' 47' 55')

SUNDAY 24 MARCH 2002

Olympic Sharks Youth 2 Marconi Stallions Youth 0
(Sarmonikas 27', Zorbas 82')

Marconi Stallions Colts 0 Wollongong Wolves Youth 2
(Dellis 26', Babic 77')

NORTHERN DIVISION LEAGUE LADDER - ROUND 24

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Power Youth	24	17	0	7	74	30	51

Wollongong Wolves Youth	24	16	2	6	63	35	50
QAS	24	15	3	6	52	29	48
Sydney United Youth	24	15	2	7	58	24	47
Marconi Stallions Youth	24	14	3	7	62	31	45
AIS	24	14	1	9	59	36	43
Newcastle United Youth	24	13	4	7	54	40	43
Olympic Sharks Youth	25	11	6	8	53	33	39
Northern Spirit Youth	23	10	5	8	51	40	35
ACTAS	24	10	4	10	45	61	34
Brisbane Toro	24	8	0	16	43	79	24
NSWIS	26	4	3	19	24	73	15
Marconi Stallions Colts	24	2	2	20	15	70	8
Sydney United Colts	24	1	3	20	15	86	6

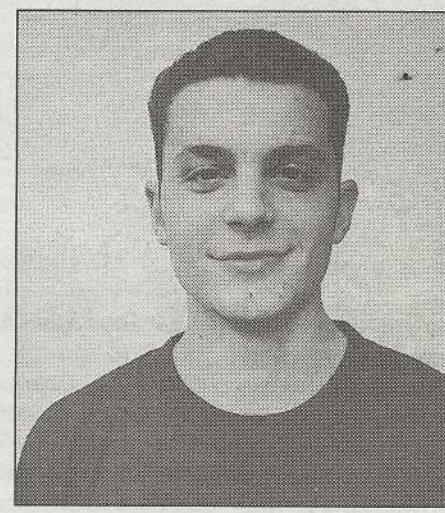
ROUND 25 FIXTURE

AIS Vs NSWIS 5.00pm - AIS Soccer Field
NSWIS Vs Olympic Sharks Youth, 6.30pm - Valentine Sports Park
Wollongong Wolves Youth Vs Sydney Utd Colts, 5.00pm - WIN Stadium
Marconi Stallions Youth Vs QAS, 4.30pm - Marconi Stadium
Sydney Utd Youth Vs Newc. Utd Youth, 2.00pm - Syd. Utd Sports Centre
Marconi Stallions Colts Vs Northern Spirit Youth, 5.00pm - Marconi Stadium
ACTAS Vs AIS, 5.00pm - AIS Soccer Field
Brisbane Toro Vs Parramatta Power Youth, 4.45pm - Perry Park
Northern Spirit Youth Vs QAS, 5.00pm - Christie Park

LEADING SCORERS

Anabalon Eric Marconi Stallions Youth

20



Anthony Sarmonikas: Olympic Sharks youngster scored his side's first goal in their two-nil win over Marconi.

SOCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

Eighteen Young Matildas aiming to make history

National Youth Coach Mike Mulvey last week named the 18-member Young Matildas Team aiming to make history in the inaugural Oceania U19 Women's World Cup Qualifying Tournament in Tonga next month.

The winner of the tournament gains Oceania's single berth to FIFA's newest event, the FIFA U19 Women's World Championship, which will be contested by twelve nations in August 2002 in Canada.

Three players are set to make their youth international debut in the do-or-die qualifiers – Canberra goalkeepers Lisa Hartley and Luisa Marzotto, and Perth striker Lisa De Vanna – after they each came under the eye of Mulvey during the training camp in January.

The remainder of the team has previous youth international experience, having competed at either or both the Central Coast International Series last August against the senior national teams of Vietnam and Singapore, and the adidas Cup in the US in June 2000 against USA and Japan. Heading the team is Matildas defender and Sydney 2000 Olympian Kate McShea.

All eighteen have at least one season's WNSL experience under their belt, this continuing to play a vital role in the national youth team program. Midfielders Stacey Stocco and Amber Neilson first showed their international potential when they broke into national league ranks at the age of thirteen.

Mulvey, whose first assignment as National Youth Coach was the Central Coast event, is pleased with the team selected for Tonga after some initial weaknesses in defence.

"We've got a good team, any of which could hold a place in the starting eleven," said Mulvey. "Since Gosford, we've seen the emergence of two goalkeepers who are both working well and there should be a good tussle between them for the number one spot. The defence too has shown a stability we've not had before."

Also keen to stress that the door is not closed once hopefully Australia qualifies for

Canada, Mulvey added, "I've said all along that the squad for the qualifiers is not necessarily the squad that will play in the World Championship. With six months before then, there is room for change."

The team will assemble for a brief training camp in mid-April before departing for Nuku'alofa, Tonga for the qualifiers scheduled for 23 April to 4 May.

Nine countries have entered the qualification tournament, the Young Matildas drawn in Group B alongside Cook Islands, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea. Group A consists of New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, and American Samoa.

"Any qualifiers for a major tournament is not going to be easy," said Mulvey of the job ahead. "I think we will have to work very hard to secure Oceania's qualification place. I understand that and the players do too."

PETERS MARKS RETURN WITH JULIE DOLAN MEDAL WIN

NSW Sapphires midfielder Joanne Peters celebrated her return to the WNSL after a two year absence by taking out the major



Kate McShea: Captain of the Young Matildas.

award at last Wednesday's Julie Dolan Medal Presentation in Canberra.

Peters, playmaker and vice-captain of the NSW Sapphires, was presented with the Julie Dolan Medal which is awarded to the national league player of the season. The 23-year-old made a welcome return to elite level football this year after deciding to take a break from the game.

Peters took out the prize by a two-point margin, polling 35 points over the ten preliminary rounds ahead of Adelaide Sensation's Lisa De Vanna (33pts), and Canberra Eclipse defender Bridgette Starr (32). An exceptional talent, Peters makes things happen from the middle of the park armed with fantastic close ball skills, vision, distribution, and a true football brain.

Peters was presented with the award at a lunch function at the Australian Institute of Sport, where she and her Matildas team mates are in camp before departing for France to compete in a four nation tournament. Peters made her international comeback in the middle of the WNSL season, helping the Matildas to victory over South

Korea in the Australia Cup in January.

Peters grew up in the country town of Leeton before moving to Sydney. The Sapphires went undefeated over the ten-round season before going down to Canberra Eclipse in the grand final earlier this month.

Seventeen-year-old De Vanna was named WNSL Rising Star, awarded to the highest polling player who made their starting debut this season. Striker De Vanna hails from Perth and was drafted into the Adelaide Sensation team for her first taste of national league competition. Her speed, skill and willingness to take on the opposition caused headaches for many a defender.

De Vanna's sensational second placing in the Julie Dolan Medal reflects the impact she made in the league, and this week she was also rewarded by being named in the Young Matildas team to contest the Oceania U19 Women's World Championship Qualification Tournament. De Vanna is the first Western Australian to receive a WNSL award.

This season, the Highest Goal scorer award was shared by three players, Caitlin Munoz of Canberra Eclipse, and NSW Sapphires pair Kelly Golebiowski and Alicia Cavanagh. Each of the strikers scored eight goals over the ten rounds. Munoz went on to score the winning goal in the grand final and

YOUNG MATILDAS

Oceania U19 Women's World Championship Qualifiers:

PLAYER WNSL	TEAM	HOMETOWN	DOB	POS
Elissia CANHAM	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	29/04/85	M
Catherine CANNULI	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	03/03/86	F
Hayley CRAWFORD	Northern NSW Pride	Newcastle	27/03/84	F
Emma DAVISON	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	04/05/85	M
Lisa DE VANNA	Adelaide Sensation	Perth	14/11/84	F
Katie GILL	Northern NSW Pride	Newcastle	10/12/84	F
Lana HARCH	Queensland Sting	Toowoomba	23/11/84	M
Lisa HARTLEY	Canberra Eclipse	Canberra	06/10/84	GK
Selin KURALAY	Victoria Vision	Melbourne	25/01/85	F
Luisa MARZOTTO	Canberra Eclipse	Canberra	17/03/84	GK
Collette McCALLUM	NSW Sapphires	Perth	26/03/86	M
Kate McSHEA	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	13/04/83	D
Caitlin MUÑOZ	Canberra Eclipse	Canberra	04/10/83	M
Amber NEILSON	Northern NSW Pride	Newcastle	14/12/84	M
Karla REUTER	Queensland Sting	Toowoomba	14/06/84	D
Thea SLATYER	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	02/02/83	D
Lorissa STEVENS	Northern NSW Pride	Cessnock	08/04/85	D
Stacey STOCCHIO	Adelaide Sensation	Adelaide	03/04/84	M

STANDBY PLAYERS (3)

Kathryn COLLINS	NSW Sapphires	Brisbane	23/02/84	D
Jessica MITCHELL	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	29/05/83	F
Nikki PICHON	NSW Sapphires	Brisbane	23/07/84	GK

is a member of the Young Matildas team as a midfielder. Kelly Golebiowski is off to France with the Matildas, whilst Cavanagh made her comeback to the WNSL after a year out.

International Player of the Year was awarded to Matildas defender Anissa Tann. The 34-year-old helped lead a solid defence which saw the Matildas gain an undefeated record of five wins and a draw in the last two Australia Cups, firstly over France in January 2001 before this year's clean sweep over South Korea.

Australia's highest-capped player with 94 'A' international appearances, Tann continues to play a key role in the Matildas program with her power, athleticism, strength in the tackle, mobility, and aerial strength.

JULIE DOLAN MEDAL PLACINGS-

Winner	Joanne Peters	NSW Sapphires	35
2nd	Lisa De Vanna	Adelaide Sensation	33
3rd	Bridgette Starr	Canberra Eclipse	32
4th	Amy Wilson	Canberra Eclipse	25
5th	Cheryl Salisbury	Adelaide Sensation	22
6th	Heather Garrick	NSW Sapphires	20
7th	Traci Bartlett	Queensland Sting	19
8th	Tal Karp	Canberra Eclipse	18



Joanne Peters: NSW Sapphires star winning the Julie Dolan Medal.



CHAMPIONS LEAGUE



CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HEATS UP

Boavista | 0
Manchester Utd | 3

Manchester United brushed aside Boavista in Porto on Tuesday night to finish top of Champions' League Group A. Laurent Blanc, Ole Gunnar Solskjær and David Beckham were all on target.

Blanc headed in the first from a Beckham corner on 13 minutes and United went close to doubling the lead soon after when a full-stretch Diego Forlán was denied by goalkeeper Ricardo following a cross from Ryan Giggs.

But it was just a matter of time before United added a second as the English



Liverpool's Emile Heskey scores past Roma's Aldair in their two-nil victory at Anfield.

A lone second half goal by Luis Enrique was enough to put Barcelona into the Champions' League quarter-finals at Galatasaray's expense in Istanbul.

Galatasaray opened brightly with Arif Erdem shooting just over the bar inside the first minute.

Barca were giving as good as they got



Galatasaray's Arif Erdem is tackled by Barcelona defenders Abelardo Fernandez and Carlos Puyol.

and Xavi went close with a shot which narrowly cleared the crossbar from outside the box on 20 minutes.

Seven minutes later Andres Fleurquin headed over the bar from a right wing corner. Another minute and Hasan burst through a square defence and Bonano had to come off his line fast to clear the danger.

Gabriel Batistuta almost levelled matters on 37 minutes from a corner conceded after a dreadful mix-up between Jerzy Dudek and Abel Xavier, but he was denied by a last-ditch clearance from Sami Hyypia.

Liverpool dominated the early part of the second half, but it was Francesco Totti who had the first real chance of the half, racing onto Assunção's ball on 55 minutes, only to hit his shot straight at Dudek. But just as Roma began to threaten to take control, Heskey struck the vital blow. Roma pressed forward, Emerson slicing wide when well placed, but in truth the Italian forward line had a disappointing night, and made little impression against a Liverpool defence superbly marshalled by Hyypia.

Barca started the second half looking the more determined side but a Berkant Goktan shot from just outside the box which flashed narrowly wide signalled a spell of Galatasaray pressure and the visitors' goal when it came was against the run of play. The Galatasaray defence failed to clear from the edge of the box on 57 minutes allowing Fabio Rochemback, a thorn in the home side all evening, to blast in a fierce drive.

Faryd Mondragon parried but could not hold the ball and Luis Enrique seized on the rebound to fire home. Galatasaray tried to press forward but Barca were playing a tight, controlled game and Rochemback, Patrick Kluivert and Abelardo all went close before a Berkant Goktan free kick 10 minutes from the end brought a fine diving save from Bonano. That proved to be Galatasaray's final flourish.

The guests took the lead on 54 minutes when Ahamedha picked up a long ball from Sylvain Armand, raced past the stumbling Thomas Linke before trying to round keeper Oliver Kahn.

Ahamedha seemed to have taken the ball too far, but still managed to get a shot in. Kahn got a hand to the ball, which span towards the line where Linke should have cleared it. Wrong-footed, though, the defender could only watch in horror as the ball trickled in at the far post.

Bayern, forced to pick up the tempo, equalised only three minutes later when Jeremies headed in Michael Tarnat's curving cross from the left.

Slowly Bayern began to take control. Roque Santa Cruz heading just over, before Salihamedha dribbled past two



Panathinaikos' Fernando Galetto slides in on Real's Flavio Conceicao.

defenders on the right, entered the box and was axed from behind by Yves Deroff.

Pizarro, stepped up, despite his latest mishit in the Bundesliga, only to place his shot straight into the outstretched arms of Willy Grodin, who proved an excellent deputy to the rested Mickael Landreau.

But just as the guests looked to have settled for what would have been a deserved point, Pizarro somehow managed to deflect Salihamedha's cross from the left past Grodin to give the hosts an extremely fortunate win with only three minutes remaining.

Galatasaray | 0
Barcelona | 1

A lone second half goal by Luis Enrique was enough to put Barcelona into the Champions' League quarter-finals at Galatasaray's expense in Istanbul.

Galatasaray opened brightly with Arif Erdem shooting just over the bar inside the first minute.

Barca were giving as good as they got



Galatasaray's Arif Erdem is tackled by Barcelona defenders Abelardo Fernandez and Carlos Puyol.

and Xavi went close with a shot which narrowly cleared the crossbar from outside the box on 20 minutes.

Seven minutes later Andres Fleurquin headed over the bar from a right wing corner. Another minute and Hasan burst through a square defence and Bonano had to come off his line fast to clear the danger.

Gabriel Batistuta almost levelled matters on 37 minutes from a corner conceded after a dreadful mix-up between Jerzy Dudek and Abel Xavier, but he was denied by a last-ditch clearance from Sami Hyypia.

Liverpool dominated the early part of the second half, but it was Francesco Totti who had the first real chance of the half, racing onto Assunção's ball on 55 minutes, only to hit his shot straight at Dudek. But just as Roma began to threaten to take control, Heskey struck the vital blow. Roma pressed forward, Emerson slicing wide when well placed, but in truth the Italian forward line had a disappointing night, and made little impression against a Liverpool defence superbly marshalled by Hyypia.

Barca started the second half looking the more determined side but a Berkant Goktan shot from just outside the box which flashed narrowly wide signalled a spell of Galatasaray pressure and the visitors' goal when it came was against the run of play. The Galatasaray defence failed to clear from the edge of the box on 57 minutes allowing Fabio Rochemback, a thorn in the home side all evening, to blast in a fierce drive.

Faryd Mondragon parried but could not hold the ball and Luis Enrique seized on the rebound to fire home. Galatasaray tried to press forward but Barca were playing a tight, controlled game and Rochemback, Patrick Kluivert and Abelardo all went close before a Berkant Goktan free kick 10 minutes from the end brought a fine diving save from Bonano. That proved to be Galatasaray's final flourish.

The guests took the lead on 54 minutes when Ahamedha picked up a long ball from Sylvain Armand, raced past the stumbling Thomas Linke before trying to round keeper Oliver Kahn.

Ahamedha seemed to have taken the ball too far, but still managed to get a shot in. Kahn got a hand to the ball, which span towards the line where Linke should have cleared it. Wrong-footed, though, the defender could only watch in horror as the ball trickled in at the far post.

Bayern, forced to pick up the tempo, equalised only three minutes later when Jeremies headed in Michael Tarnat's curving cross from the left.

Slowly Bayern began to take control. Roque Santa Cruz heading just over, before Salihamedha dribbled past two



Panathinaikos' Fernando Galetto slides in on Real's Flavio Conceicao.

defenders on the right, entered the box and was axed from behind by Yves Deroff.

Pizarro, stepped up, despite his latest mishit in the Bundesliga, only to place his shot straight into the outstretched arms of Willy Grodin, who proved an excellent deputy to the rested Mickael Landreau.

But just as the guests looked to have settled for what would have been a deserved point, Pizarro somehow managed to deflect Salihamedha's cross from the left past Grodin to give the hosts an extremely fortunate win with only three minutes remaining.

Bayern Munich | 2
Nantes | 1

champions were determined to keep the pressure on.

But Giggs then shot after a scything run into the box and Solskjær made no mistake from the rebound.

The match stuck to the same script in the second half and United were 3-0 up when Beckham converted from the spot after Martelinho had brought down Scholes.

Serginho should have reduced the deficit on 60 minutes but he headed wide from a free kick. The Brazilian almost netted again late on but Fabien Bartez saved his curling effort.

Seven minutes later Andres Fleurquin headed over the bar from a right wing corner. Another minute and Hasan burst through a square defence and Bonano had to come off his line fast to clear the danger.

Gabriel Batistuta almost levelled matters on 37 minutes from a corner conceded after a dreadful mix-up between Jerzy Dudek and Abel Xavier, but he was denied by a last-ditch clearance from Sami Hyypia.

Liverpool dominated the early part of the second half, but it was Francesco Totti who had the first real chance of the half, racing onto Assunção's ball on 55 minutes, only to hit his shot straight at Dudek. But just as Roma began to threaten to take control, Heskey struck the vital blow. Roma pressed forward, Emerson slicing wide when well placed, but in truth the Italian forward line had a disappointing night, and made little impression against a Liverpool defence superbly marshalled by Hyypia.

Barca started the second half looking the more determined side but a Berkant Goktan shot from just outside the box which flashed narrowly wide signalled a spell of Galatasaray pressure and the visitors' goal when it came was against the run of play. The Galatasaray defence failed to clear from the edge of the box on 57 minutes allowing Fabio Rochemback, a thorn in the home side all evening, to blast in a fierce drive.

Faryd Mondragon parried but could not hold the ball and Luis Enrique seized on the rebound to fire home. Galatasaray tried to press forward but Barca were playing a tight, controlled game and Rochemback, Patrick Kluivert and Abelardo all went close before a Berkant Goktan free kick 10 minutes from the end brought a fine diving save from Bonano. That proved to be Galatasaray's final flourish.

The guests took the lead on 54 minutes when Ahamedha picked up a long ball from Sylvain Armand, raced past the stumbling Thomas Linke before trying to round keeper Oliver Kahn.

Ahamedha seemed to have taken the ball too far, but still managed to get a shot in. Kahn got a hand to the ball, which span towards the line where Linke should have cleared it. Wrong-footed, though, the defender could only watch in horror as the ball trickled in at the far post.

Bayern, forced to pick up the tempo, equalised only three minutes later when Jeremies headed in Michael Tarnat's curving cross from the left.

Slowly Bayern began to take control. Roque Santa Cruz heading just over, before Salihamedha dribbled past two

The hosts got off to a dream start as striker Nikos Liberopoulos thumped a sumptuous volley past Iker Casillas in the ninth minute. Panathinaikos' celebrations were shortlived as Steve McManaman put Fernando Morientes in behind the home defence to lob in a head-equaliser two minutes later.

Silence fell in the previously raucous Leoforos stadium but Jan Michaelson should have restored the Greeks' lead before the break when put through one-on-one with Casillas but delayed allowing the keeper to save.

Defender Yiannis Goumas scored a captain's goal after the hour, heading home a Giorgos Karagounis corner to restore the hosts' lead.

Home coach Sergio Markarian brought on forward reinforcements in the shape of Emmanuel Olisadebe and the home side continued to look for a third goal but Real looked increasingly fluent.

Argentine substitute Santiago Solari cemented his burgeoning reputation with some stylish touches but the real find of the evening was youngster Portillo.

A constant threat up front for the visitors the mobile forward grabbed a goal out of nothing with 10 minutes to go, as he shot from 30 yards into the top corner past Antonis Nikopolidis.

Sparta Prague | 2
Porto | 0

Second half goals from Libor Sionko and Jiri Jarosik gave Sparta Prague a 2-0 Champions' League Group C victory over Porto on Wednesday evening, dashing the Portuguese side's dreams of reaching the last eight of the competition.

As it turned out, Panathinaikos' draw against Real Madrid would have seen the Greeks through at Porto's expense anyway, but that does little to explain a toothless display from Jose Mourinho's side. Apart from brief touches, Capuchino, Deco and Clayton lacked invention and the visitors' main first-half threat came from balls over the back line for Helder Postiga. In the second half Rafael smashed an 18-yard volley over the bar and Carlos Paredes glanced a header just over, but otherwise Petr Cech was rarely troubled by Sparta's goal.

Sionko, sporting a black eye from his last league game, confirmed that he is Sparta's form player of the moment by slotting the first goal past Paulo Santos in the 64th minute, after receiving a pass on the halfway line from Jarosik and racing all the way to the edge of the area, nutmegging Jorge Andrade on the way.

It was the cue for Leverkusen to score their second goal through Schneider. Brazilian defender Lucio flicked on a right-wing centre and the midfielder got just enough purchase on the ball to help it over the line as Carsten Ramelow followed in.

Depor coach Javier Irureta finally reacted to a side missing eight of the players whom lined up against Arsenal in last week's 2-0 win - including Tristan, Juan Carlos Valeron and Fran.

Sergio and Valeron took the field and things began looking up for the frustrated home crowd, with Sergio shooting narrowly wide from 18 yards on 63 minutes.

Top scorer Tristan took the field soon after, but Leverkusen continued to look dangerous on the break and another substitute, Neuville, forced the save of the night from Nuno after breaking through on the right.

Then came Tristan's goal - out of nothing. There looked little danger when the Spain forward took possession with his back to goal, but his shot on the turn reared up off Placente and past a helpless Butt. The Razor faithful urged their side forward in search of an equaliser, but Leverkusen looked solid at the back and almost scored a third goal themselves when Neuville wrong-footed Nuno on 80 minutes.

He settled the match late on, though, attacking a cross at the near post to send his side into the last eight and consign Depor to second place in the pool.

Diego Tristan brought Depor back into the game from 2-0 down when his shot deflected home off Placente on 75 minutes, but Neuville's flicked header from Ballack's cross confirmed the German victory in the closing stages.

As it was, Ballack headed the only goal from eight yards after fine work by Ze Roberto and Thomas Brdaric just past the half-hour in a curiously muted Riazor.

Ze Roberto showed great skill to elude his marker on the half-way line and raced forward, before slipping a pass out to Brdaric on the left. The midfielder crossed on the run and Ballack leapt above Mauro Silva to score.

Brdaric put a great chance into the

side-netting when played through on the left, before Schneider did much the same after Ze Roberto fired over a low cross. Depor threatened for the first time on 19 minutes. Jens Nowotny was booked for bringing down Aldo Duscher and the resulting Djalminta free-kick was messily collected by Hans-Jorg Butt in the Leverkusen goal.

The goal came at the cruellest time, just after the news had filtered through from Spain that Depor had scored to reduce Leverkusen's lead to 2-1. And yet it could have been so different had Henry not spurned a golden opportunity to put Arsenal ahead on 51 minutes.

Henry was brought down by Cristian Zenoni, and, despite having a penalty saved by Deportivo la Coruna keeper Francisco Molina last week, stepped up to take the penalty himself.

His spot-kick though, lacked conviction, and was pushed onto the inside of the post by Juventus' reserve keeper. The ball bounced across the face of goal, but was hacked to safety before any Arsenal player could react to the loose ball.

With Kanu, preferred to Wiltord in the starting line-up, having one of his less involved games, Henry was left to bear the burden of leading the line, and he almost atoned for his penalty miss just before the hour, bursting down the left, and firing just wide from a narrow angle as no support arrived in the middle.

Robert Pires had come closest to breaking the deadlock in the first-half, side-footing just wide on 45 minutes, but, a couple of moments of inspiration from Fredrik Ljungberg aside, Arsenal never really looked like breaking through in the opening period.

Even having gone behind, the chances didn't flow. Ljungberg was denied by a magnificent save from Fabian Carini, and things certainly picked up once Sylvain Wiltord had come on for Edu, but still Arsenal could have few complaints.



Juve's Marcelo Zalayeta contests for a high ball.

SECOND GROUP PHASE TABLES

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	6	3	3	0	13	3	12
Bayern Munich	6	3	3	0	5	2	12
Boavista	6	1	2	3	2	8	5
Nantes	6	0	2	4	4	11	2



RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

Last week was another disappointing week for Italian football in the Champions League. The previous week Juventus were eliminated and last week it was Roma's turn.

Liverpool's victory at Anfield signalled the end for Fabio Capello's team. It meant that for the second year running an Italian team has not reached the quarterfinal stage of the tournament.

Europe's and the world's most prestigious club tournament will be another television event this year for the Italian teams. Italian football, sadly, has a lot to be embarrassed about. How could it all go so wrong?

The magic answer to our question is not readily available. However, one has to ask, is Italian football overrated? Are the other European teams too strong? Does the Serie A take too much out of the teams? The debate about all this has only just begun in the bars around Italy.

It is interesting to note that the Champions League has only English, Spanish and German teams left, with the only exception being Panathinaikos of Greece.

There might be even further bad news for Italy on the way given the performances of their teams in the Champions League.

According to reports, from season 2003/04, Italy may be only able to field three teams in the competition as opposed to its current four. What a disaster that would be!

Given the recent events, can the Serie A still claim to be the world's best league? ♦♦♦♦

After 27 rounds he had scored 22 goals. He has scored more than Christian Vieri, Gabriel Batistuta, Andrey Shevchenko, Alessandro Del Piero and Hernan Crespo, just to name a few.

He is Piacenza's Dario Hubner and he leads the goal-scoring table in the Serie A. At the end of April he will turn 35 and he has never played for Italy. However, his performances are making all the big name strikers look somewhat ordinary.

There is now a push, both from public and media, for Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni to take him to the World Cup. Hubner modesty says that he has thought about it and that it would be nice.

The magnitude of Hubner's achievement cannot be underestimated. He is playing for Piacenza, a team that is fighting to avoid relegation.

Unlike the big name strikers he hasn't got a team around him, like they have, to supply him with good quality balls and thus provide opportunities for him.

No offence to the Piacenza team but they are certainly not Juventus, Roma or Inter. It is harder to score for an ordinary team because you haven't got the same support around you.

Hubner may well be included in Trapattoni's team but that is far from certain. Trapattoni generally considers Del Piero, Vieri, Montella, Delvecchio, Inzaghi, Di Vaio and Ventola the strikers ahead of him. Furthermore, his age may be a factor against him.

So just who is Hubner? His Serie B career started in 1992 at Cesena where he played for five seasons. In 1997 he moved to Brescia and made his Serie A debut aged 30. After four years at Brescia, last summer he signed for Piacenza and is now approaching the end of his first season there.

So at 35 years of age, will we see him in the World Cup? There is absolutely no doubt that he is late developer and there is also no doubt that he deserves a spot.

As Juventus prepare to take on Lazio in a vital clash at the Stadio Delle Alpi Stadium in Turin this weekend, a small thought should be spared for Lazio goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi.

The 32 year old Peruzzi is a former Juventus goalkeeper. He spent eight years at the club (1991-99) winning every major title available. He spent the 1999/2000 season at Inter and this is his second year at Lazio.

He is a Roma junior and spent four years at the club over two stints between 1987 and 1991, interrupted by a year, 1989/90, at Verona.

In 1990 his career reached a low point when he was banned for a year for taking illegal drugs. However, he recovered and went on to play 25 times for Italy.

Peruzzi, though, has never played in a World Cup and now never will. For someone who has achieved so much, this must be a source of great disappointment.

In 1994 he was overlooked by Arrigo Sacchi for a place and the three keepers taken were Gianluca Pagliuca, currently at Bologna, Luca Marchegiani, ironically Peruzzi's understudy now at Lazio, and Luca Bucci, currently at Torino.

Many considered Peruzzi unlucky and straight after that World Cup he became the number one.

In 1998 he was certain to be taken to France but a last minute injury forced him to withdraw. Pagliuca returned to be the keeper and current number one, Gianluigi Buffon, was his understudy.

After that World Cup Italy's new coach, Dino Zoff, never selected Peruzzi again mainly for personal reasons. It was to be the end of his international career.

Inter take vital step towards Scudetto with convincing win over Roma

BOLOGNA 4 LECCE 3

Salvatore Fresi struck the winning goal as Bologna maintained their Champions League charge with a thrilling 4-3 win over Lecce at the Renato Dall'Ara stadium, a victory that keeps them in fourth place in the table.

The defender came up to score eight minutes from time after Bologna had come from 2-1 down at half-time and 3-2 down with 20 minutes remaining. Fabio Pecchia had given the hosts the lead, before two goals from Gheorghe Popescu put Lecce in front.

Ernesto Chevanton put the visitors back on level terms in the 68th minute, but another leveller by Giuseppe Signori four minutes later was quick in coming before Fresi's late intervention.

CHIEVO 2 VERONA 1

Chievo tasted defeat against Verona in November, but made amends on Sunday with a valuable 2-1 victory that keeps them just two points behind fourth-placed Bologna.

They did it the hard way, coming from behind and then having Fabio Moro dismissed in the dying minutes, but three points were imperative given that their close rivals were also winning. Federico Cossato got both goals for Chievo who, in their first season in Serie A, are fifth with six rounds of matches to play.

PIACENZA 0 MILAN 1

Milan put talk of an all-Milanese UEFA Cup final to one side as they recorded a 1-0 win that keeps their slender hopes of qualifying for the Champions League alive. Sunday's victory putting them just three points behind Bologna and in sixth position in the table.

Serginho's 20th-minute penalty was all that divided the teams, with Christian Abbiati performing heroics to keep out the home team in the second half.



Inter's Christiano Zanetti challenges Roma's Assuncao.

LAZIO 2 UDINESE 0

The black day of 10 March was forgotten as S.S. Lazio put the derby annihilation to the back of their minds and claimed a useful 2-0 home win against Udinese.

Dejan Stankovic shot Lazio ahead in the first half and Stefano Fiore wrapped up the victory when he scored 12 minutes from the end. The defeat means that Udinese are now in



Parma striker Junior tussles with Juve's Antonio Conte.

Montella had hit the bar for the visitors in the opening exchanges but the home side went up the other end and Recoba got between two defenders to score. Inter sat back on their lead and Roma began to control the game. The visitors almost drew level on 38 minutes when Marco Del Vecchio hit a post following a perfect ball by Roma captain Francesco Totti.

But Roma were caught them on the break two minutes before half-time

Stadio Delle Alpi. Fiorentina remain second from bottom, eleven points adrift of safety. The win eases Torino's own relegation worries though and they climb to tenth.

VENEZIA 0 ATALANTA 1

A goal five minutes from time by Fausto Rossini gave Atalanta three welcome points against Venezia, virtually condemning their opponents to relegation in the process.

BRESCIA 3 PERUGIA 0

Brescia collected three valuable points at home to Perugia, courtesy of a first half Luca Toni hat-trick.

As a result, Brescia remain one place and one point clear of the relegation zone in 14th position.

Toni's first was from close range, his second a header from Andrea Sussi's cross while the pick was the third when he struck from the edge of the penalty area.

PARMA 1 JUVENTUS 0

Juventus FC's title hopes suffered a setback as they slipped to their fourth Serie A defeat of the season against Parma.

Marcello Lippi's side looked set to secure a point but were denied a share of the spoils when Sabri Lamouchi struck the only goal of the game for Parma two minutes from time. Lamouchi stunned the visitors when he fired a low shot from the right edge of the penalty area past Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon.

This Week

March 30

AC Milan v Parma
Atalanta v Piacenza
Fiorentina v Internazionale
Juventus v Lazio
Lecce v Venezia
Perugia v Chievo
Roma v Bologna
Udinese v Brescia
Verona v Torino

Inter 3 Roma 1, Bologna 4 Lecce 3, Brescia 3 Perugia 0, Chievo 2 Verona 1, Lazio 2 Udinese 0, Piacenza 0 Milan 1, Torino 1 Fiorentina 0, Venezia 0 Atalanta 1, Parma 1 Juventus 0.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pts
1. Inter	28	17	8	3	51-25	59
2. Roma	28	15	11	2	44-20	56
3. Juventus	28	15	10	3	50-22	55
4. Bologna	28	14	6	8	35-30	48
5. Chievo	28	12	9	7	47-39	45
6. Milan	28	11	11	6	38-29	44
7. Lazio	28	10	10	8	38-28	40
8. Torino	28	9	9	10	32-34	36
9. Perugia	28	10	6	12	30-38	36
10. Atalanta	28	10	6	12	33-43	36
11. Verona	28	10	5	13	35-42	35
12. Parma	28	9	7	12	34-38	34
13. Brescia	28	7	12	9	34-42	33
14. Piacenza	28	8	8	12	39-37	32
15. Udinese	28	8	7	13	35-44	31
16. Lecce	28	5	9	14	30-45	24
17. Fiorentina	28	5	7	16	28-51	22



ENGLAND



Liverpool on top in the Premiership



Sol Campbell heads Arsenal into a commanding 3-0 lead over Newcastle.

FA CUP QUARTER-FINAL REPLAY

**ARSENAL 3
NEWCASTLE UTD 0**

Arsenal put the disappointment of Wednesday's Champions' League exit behind them in the best possible way on Saturday when they brushed Newcastle United aside at Highbury to cruise into the semi-finals of the FA Cup.

Arsene Wenger's team got off to a flying start as they took a two-goal lead in the first ten minutes.

Robert Pires set the ball rolling when he opened the scoring after just 65 seconds. The France winger raced on to a Dennis Bergkamp pass before curling a first-time shot into the far corner of the net from the left of the penalty area.

In the ninth minute, Arsenal did go two up. Again Pires and Bergkamp were at the heart of the move, this time the Frenchman laying on a perfect square pass for his Dutch team-mate to slot home from six yards.

Newcastle came close to pulling one back in the 20th minute when Alan Shearer chipped Richard Wright from 25 yards, but the ball drifted fractionally wide of the top-left corner.

Arsenal were dealt a major blow in the 23rd minute when Pires was stretchered off with a serious knee injury. He was replaced by countrymen Gilles Grimandi.

The atmosphere at Highbury immediately became more subdued as the Arsenal fans feared for their flying French winger.

Given came to Newcastle's rescue again in the 44th minute when

he pulled off an acrobatic save to his right from Fredrik Ljungberg after the Swede had made a run through the heart of the defence.

Arsenal, though, scored the all-important third goal shortly after half-time when Sol Campbell netted a thundering header from Bergkamp's right-wing free-kick.

Bergkamp was in dazzling form and he hit the woodwork for the second time in the game in the 52nd minute. The Dutchman manufactured space on the edge of the area with sublime footwork before chipping his shot on to the post.

The game petered out in the closing stages as both managers made a string of substitutions, but Arsenal held out easily to secure a semi-final showdown with Middlesbrough.

**FULHAM 0
TOTTENHAM 2**

Tottenham Hotspur needed an element of fortune to bring their four game losing streak to an end at Craven Cottage.

The defeat was Fulham's sixth in a row and left them just three points clear of the relegation zone. Spurs struck twice in a four-minute spell midway through the first-half.

The crucial opener came when Fulham were aggrieved to concede a free-kick on the edge of the box. Christian Ziege's shot cannoned off the edge of the wall before striking Teddy Sheringham in the face and wrong footing Edvin van der Saar in the Fulham goal.

Ziege then got away down the left and chose to shoot with Sheringham unmarked in the middle. Van der Saar parried the German's drive but the ball fell to

Gustavo Poyet, who slotted home.

**LIVERPOOL 1
CHELSEA 0**

A dramatic volley in injury time from Vladimir Smicer took Liverpool to the top of the Premiership after they had been outplayed for long periods by Chelsea.

Mario Stanic, Eidur Gudjohnsen and Jimmy Hasselbaink all missed good chances for the Londoners, the best falling to Hasselbaink who missed a great chance to win the game near the end. He combined well with substitute Gianfranco Zola and chipped the ball over the onrushing Jerzy Dudek only to see the ball nestle on the top of the net. Emile Heskey then crossed for Smicer to volley home to send Anfield wild.

**MAN UTD 0
MIDDLESBROUGH 1**

Len Boksic scored the only goal as Middlesbrough shocked Manchester United on Saturday to put a huge dent in their hosts' championship bid.

Benito Carbone robbed Juan Sebastian Veron in the left-back position and outpaced the Argentine before crossing for Boksic to beat Fabien Barthez on nine minutes.

Boksic missed two more presentable chances before half-time, while Ryan Giggs pulled United's best opportunity wide from 12 yards. The defeat leaves the Reds just a point clear of Arsenal, who have two games in hand.

**DERBY COUNTY 3
EVERTON 4**

Everton pushed Derby County nearer the drop in a thriller at Pride Park.

David Moyes' side took the lead on 38 minutes through David Unsworth, who whistled a shot into the corner from Thomas Gravesen's lay-back.

Alan Stubbs rattled in a second goal for the visitors from a free-kick on 52 minutes, before Niclas Alexandersson made it 3-0 when a cross eluded several players in the Derby box.

Substitute Branko Strupar volleyed home to give Derby hope, but the match looked up when Duncan Ferguson picked his spot from 18 yards.

Lee Morris hooked in from close range on 76 minutes to make it 4-2, though, and Strupar converted a Morris centre to further reduce the deficit and set up a grandstand finish, which Everton somehow survived.

**CHARLTON 1
BOLTON WAN 2**

Bolton Wanderers kept their hopes of another season in the Premiership alive with victory at Charlton Athletic, courtesy

of two goals from France midfielder Youri Djorkaeff.

The former Kaiserslautern star struck on 15 minutes after linking up with Fredi Bobic. Jason Euell then missed a penalty for Charlton before Djorkaeff made it 2-0 before half-time from a deflected free-kick.

Charlton got back into contention when Jonatan Johansson, on as a substitute, nodded in a Euell cross, but Bolton held out to gain three priceless points.

**LEICESTER CITY 0
LEEDS UNITED 2**

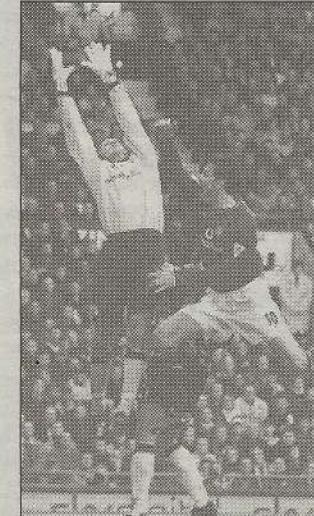
Improving Leeds United maintained their push for a Champions' League spot with a comfortable win at doomed Leicester City.

Mark Viduka buried the first goal on 18 minutes after Robbie Fowler's shot was saved and the Australian returned the favour for his strike partner just past the half-hour, hitting the bar and allowing the England man to tap home.

**IPSWICH TOWN 0
ASTON VILLA 0**

Ipswich Town FC were left frustrated and back in the bottom three as they went in search of their first home league win over Aston Villa FC for 18 years.

George Burley's strugglers, in need of victory with games run-



Rudd van Nistlerooy clashes with Middlesbrough's Aussie goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer.

ning out, had much of the game but played out a goalless draw against Graham Taylor's men.

**SUNDERLAND 1
SOUTHAMPTON 1**

And Sunderland are still looking over their shoulder after conceding an 88th-minute equaliser to Southampton at the Stadium of Light.

Jason McAteer broke the deadlock in a poor match on 62 minutes and the Seasiders looked set for a barely-deserved three points before Jo Tessem headed in a left-wing free-kick at the near post.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Fulham 0 Tottenham Hotspur 2, Liverpool 1 Chelsea 0, Charlton Athletic 1 Bolton Wanderers 2, Manchester Utd 0 Middlesbrough 1, Sunderland 1 Southampton 1, Derby County 3 Everton 4, Ipswich Town 0 Aston Villa 0, Leicester City 0 Leeds United 2.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pts
1. Liverpool	32	19	8	5	53-26	65
2. Manchester Utd	32	20	4	8	78-41	64
3. Arsenal	30	18	9	3	60-32	63
4. Newcastle United	30	17	5	8	54-40	56
5. Leeds United	31	14	12	5	44-30	54
6. Chelsea	31	14	11	6	58-31	53
7. Aston Villa	31	10	12	9	35-36	42
8. Charlton Athletic	31	10	11	10	35-36	41
9. Tottenham Hotspur	31	12	5	14	41-45	41
10. Middlesbrough	31	10	8	13	30-38	38
11. Southampton	31	10	7	14	38-46	37
12. West Ham United	30	10	7	13	35-49	37
13. Everton	31	9	9	13	33-39	36
14. Fulham	31	8	11	12	30-38	35
15. Sunderland	31	9	8	14	24-38	35
16. Bolton Wanderers	31	7	12	12	34-48	33
17. Blackburn Rovers	30	8	8	14	39-41	32
18. Ipswich Town	31	8	8	15	38-49	32
19. Derby County	31	8	5	18	29-51	29
20. Leicester City	31	3	10	18	21-55	19

FIRST DIVISION

Coventry City 1 Birmingham City 1, Gillingham 1 Millwall 0, Barnsley 2 Watford 0, Bradford 2 Crewe 0, C Palace 2 Walsall 0, Grimsby 6 Wimbledon 2, P'mouth 0 Sheff Wed 0, Rotherham 1 Man C 1, Sheff Utd 3 Burnley 0, Stockport 0 Preston 2, Wolves 0 Norwich 0, Forest 0 West Brom 1.

1. Man City	41	26	6	9	43	84
2. Wolverhampton Wanderers	41	23	10	8	34	79
3. West Bromwich Albion	40	22	7	11	23	73
4. Burnley	41	19	11	11	8	68
5. Coventry City	41	20	6	15	14	66
6. Millwall	41	18	10	13	14	64
7. Birmingham City	40	18	10	12	13	64
8. Preston	41	17	12	12	8	63
9. Norwich	41	18	8	15	3	62
10. Crystal Palace	41	19	4	18	9	61
11. Wimbledon	40	15	13	12	5	58
12. Gillingham	41	16	9	16	-1	57
13. Sheff Utd	41	14	14	13	0	56
14. Watford	41	15	10	16	10	55
15. Portsmouth	41	13	12	16	-7	51
16. Nottm Forest	41	11	17	13	2	50
17. Bradford City	41	14	8	19	-6	50
18. Rotherham Utd	41	10	16	15	-11	46
19. Grimsby Town	41	11	12	18	-18	45
20. Sheff Wed	41	11	12	18	-19	45
21. Crewe Alexandra	38	11	10	17	-23	43
22. Barnsley	41	9	15	17	-21	42
23. Walsall	41	10	10	21	-23	40
24. Stockport	41	4	8	29	-57	20

SECOND DIVISION

Bournemouth 1 Bristol City 3, Brighton 2 Notts County 2, Bury 1 Port Vale 1, Huddersfield Town 2 Northampton Town 0, QPR 1 Peterborough United 0, Reading 2 Oldham Athletic 2, Stoke City 1 Chesterfield 0, Wigan Athletic 1 Tranmere Rovers 2, Wycombe Wanderers 0 Colchester United 0.

	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1. Reading	41	23	10	8	27	79
2. Brighton	41	21	14	6	18	77
3. Brentford	41	22	9	10	32	75
4. Stoke City	41	21	10	10	26	73
5. Huddersfield Town	40	20	12	8	21	72
6. Bristol City	41	20	8	13	18	68
7. Cardiff City	40	18	13	9	19	67

WORLD

Spanish Primera Liga

Defender's hat-trick keeps Real at top of La Liga

Central defender Fernando Hierro struck a hat-trick to lead Real Madrid CF to a 3-1 win at home to Real Zaragoza and keep his side top of the Primera División.

Hierro bundled in the first from a corner, added his second from the penalty spot and, after Savo Milosevic had pulled one back for the visitors, the Spanish international wrapped up the win with a left-foot shot from the edge of the area.

The result gives Madrid 56

rivals Barcelona kept their fading title hopes alive with a 2-1 win at Real Valladolid despite having skipper Abelardo sent off late in the opening period.

Dutch wizard Patrick Kluivert helped to secure the win with a brilliant individual finish in the 11th minute to go joint top of the goalscorers' standings with Real's Fernando Morientes and Celta Vigo's Catana - on target in a 6-1 away thrashing of Athletic Bilbao. It was double Dutch delight for Champions League quarter-final-

Two late goals by Martín Astudillo and Daniel Iván Alonso gave Deportivo Alavés three points against RCD Espanyol at the Montjuic stadium. Espanyol had taken the lead a minute before half-time when Enrique de Lucas fired home from close range, but Astudillo equalised nine minutes from time and Alonso headed the winner in the dying seconds.

Darko Kovacevic scored two crucial goals for Real Sociedad as they beat RCD Mallorca 2-0 to stay clear of the relegation zone. Mallorca dominated the goalless first half, but Kovacevic made the home side pay for their wayward finishing as he scored with a header four minutes into the second period. The Yugoslavian international striker then made it 2-0 in the 61st minute when he was on hand to stab the ball home from a metre out.

Real Betis' title hopes took a knock as they were held to a 0-0 draw in Saturday's Seville derby.

Seville FC earned a moral victory as they held out for a point despite having Gerardo Torrado dismissed for a second yellow card after 54 minutes and restricted the home side to long-range shots. Benjamin Zarandona forced Sevilla goalkeeper Antonio Notario into an acrobatic save after just 30 seconds and the goalkeeper was called into action again to deny Dani's shot two minutes before half-time.

The home side missed a superb opportunity to score after 69 minutes as Capi gathered the ball with Notario stranded outside his area, but the midfield player blasted his shot against the crossbar. Betis were almost made to pay for their error when Nico Oliviera found himself in space in added time but

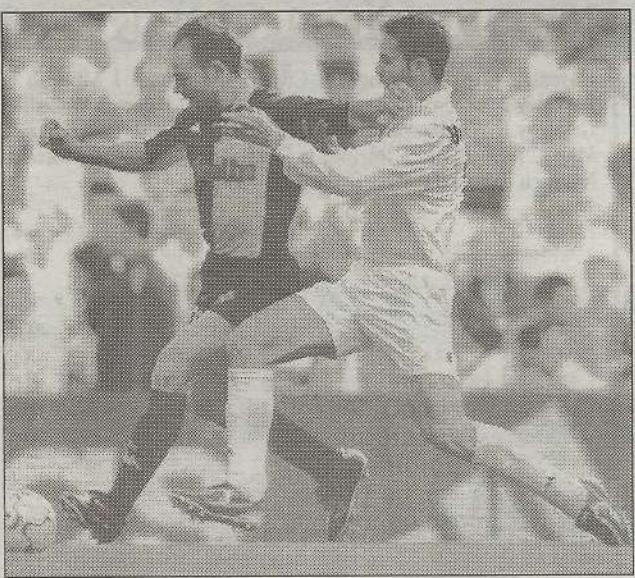
with just goalkeeper Antoni Prats to beat, he put his shot well wide.

Rayo Vallecano remain deep in relegation trouble after their goalless draw at Málaga CF. Rayo, 2-1 winners against Valencia CF last week, were poor in the first half against Málaga but had the better chances after the break and almost grabbed victory as Pedro Contreras tipped over a fine left-foot strike from Vivas Dorado on 85 minutes. Rayo played the last three minutes with ten men as French defender Jean-François Hernandez was sent off for a second booking and they had to settle for a draw that left them in 18th place, just a point off the bottom.

Las Palmas, a place ahead of Rayo on goal difference, failed to score against Villarreal, but the visitors also failed to break the deadlock at the Insular stadium and the game ended with a 0-0 draw.



Valencia's Angulo (r) holds off Osasuna's Romero.



Real's Morientes and Zaragoza's Jemez locked together as they duel for the ball.

points from 31 games and secures their position at the top of the table for at least another week. Valencia CF are level on points with Vicente del Bosque's side as they kept pace with the leaders with a 2-1 home victory against Club Atlético Osasuna.

Juan Sánchez opened the scoring in the 79th minute but John Aloisi equalised with five minutes remaining. Rubén Baraja secured three points for Valencia deep into injury time, making amends for an earlier penalty miss. Romero was sent off for Osasuna on the half-hour mark.

Real's Champions League

ists Barca as Philip Cocu bagged their second goal four minutes before the interval after the Catalan club had to recover from Luis García's ninth-minute opener for Valladolid.

But Barca remain six points off the pace in sixth spot.

RC Deportivo La Coruña remain third, two points behind Madrid thanks to a 3-1 win at home to CD Tenerife. Federico Lussenhoff gave Tenerife the lead after 20 minutes and his teammates appeared to be hanging on for three points until Lionel Scaloni equalised with 16 minutes remaining. Scaloni grabbed his second seven minutes later and Roy Makaay sealed victory five minutes from time. Diego Tristán had earlier missed a 66th-minute penalty for Deportivo.

RC Celta Vigo maintained their push for a UEFA Champions League place with a stunning 6-1 win at Athletic Club Bilbao that lifted them to fourth on 51 points. Goals from Catana and Vágner Rogério put them 2-0 up, although Ismael Urzaiz gave the home crowd hope by pulling one back on the stroke of half-time. Celta added a further four goals in 18 second-half minutes, with Peter Luccin, Valeri Karpin, Jesuli and Florian Maurice all getting on the scoresheet.

Valladolid 1 Barcelona 2, Valencia 2 Osasuna 1, Espanyol 1 Alaves 2, Atlético 1 Celta 6, Real 3 Zaragoza 1, Deportivo 3 Tenerife 1, Mallorca 0 Real Sociedad 2, Las Palmas 3 Villarreal 2, Betis 0 Sevilla 0, Málaga 0 Rayo Vallecano 0.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pnt
1. Real	31	16	8	7	60-33	56
2. Valencia	31	15	11	5	38-25	56
3. Deportivo	31	16	6	9	48-36	54
4. Celta	31	13	12	6	56-37	51
5. Betis	31	13	12	6	35-26	51
6. Barcelona	31	14	8	9	51-30	50
7. Atlético	31	13	9	9	44-49	48
8. Alaves	31	14	3	14	33-33	45
9. Málaga	31	10	12	9	35-37	42
10. Espanyol	31	11	8	12	38-44	41
11. Valladolid	31	11	7	13	36-50	40
12. Sevilla	31	10	9	12	43-36	39
13. Real Sociedad	31	10	6	15	38-43	36
14. Las Palmas	31	9	9	13	34-40	36
15. Villarreal	31	8	10	13	34-41	34
16. Mallorca	31	9	7	15	34-41	34
17. Osasuna	31	8	10	13	29-41	34
18. Rayo Vallecano	31	8	9	14	36-47	33
19. Zaragoza	31	9	6	16	29-45	33
20. Tenerife	31	8	8	15	25-42	32

WORLD LEAGUES

DUTCH EREDIVISIE

De Graafschap 0 Utrecht 0, RKC 3 Twente 1, Groningen 0 Roda 2, Sparta 0 Feyenoord 5, PSV 1 Ajax 1, Heerenveen 4 NEC 0, Den Bosch 1 Willem II 2, NAC 3 Vitesse 3, Fortuna 0 AZ 1.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pnt
1. Ajax	28	17	7	4	59-28	58
2. Feyenoord	27	17	4	6	62-22	55
3. Heerenveen	27	15	6	6	50-19	51
4. PSV	27	15	6	6	58-28	51
5. Vitesse	28	12	11	5	34-28	47
6. NAC	28	13	7	8	49-44	46
7. Utrecht	28	11	8	9	52-44	41
8. RKC	28	12	5	11	39-34	41
9. Willem II	28	9	10	9	45-47	37
10. AZ	28	10	5	13	33-38	35
11. NEC	28	10	5	13	28-47	35
12. Roda	28	9	5	14	28-42	32
13. Groningen	28	9	5	14	33-50	32
14. Twente	28	7	10	11	34-38	31
15. Den Bosch	28	7	9	12	35-45	30
16. De Graafschap	27	8	5	14	34-45	29
17. Sparta	28	4	11	13	26-62	23
18. Fortuna	28	2	7	19	22-60	13

BELGIAN EERSTEKLASSE

La Louviere 1 RWDM 0, Brugge 0 Gent 1, Aalst 3 Germinal 3, Lokeren 2 Westerlo 0, Lierse 6 Lommel 3, Genk 3 Charleroi 2, Beveren 0 Mouscron 1, Antwerp 4 Sint-Truiden 1, Anderlecht 0 Standart 0.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pnt
1. Genk	28	17	10	1	76-37	61
2. Brugge	28	19	2	7	64-34	59
3. Anderlecht	28	15	10	3	60-29	55
4. Mouscron	28	15	4	9	59-32	49
5. Standart	27	13	8	6	48-31	47
6. Gent	28	13	8	7	48-41	47
7. Lokeren	28	13	7	8	37-29	46
8. Sint-Truiden	28	12	4	12	41-42	40
9. Germinal	27	8	12	7	52-42	36
10. RWDM	28	10	4	14	37-47	34
11. Charleroi	28	9	6	13	33-50	33
12. La Louviere	28	8	8	12	33-50	32
13. Lierse	28	8	7	13	49-55	31
14. Lommel	28	8	7	13	45-56	31
15. Westerlo	28	8	6	14	43-52	30
16. Antwerp	28	6	8	14	39-55	26
17. Aalst	28	4	7	17	24-61	19
18. Beveren	28	2	8	18	29-74	14

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

Bastia 3 Montpellier 0, Lille 2 Auxerre 3, Olympique (L) 2 Lorient 0, Metz 2 Sochaux 0, Nantes 3 Rennais 1, Sedan 1 Lens 1, Troyes 2 Bordeaux 0, Guingamp 0 Paris Saint Germain 1, Playing on Sunday, March 24; Olympique (M) v Monaco.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pnt
1. Lens	30	17	9	4	49-23	60
2. Olympique (L)	30	17	5	8	57-31	56
3. Paris St Germain	30	14	12	4	40-21	54
4. Auxerre	28	15	9	4	40-27	54
5. Lille	30	14	9	7	37-27	51
6. Bordeaux	30	13	8	9	30-25	47
7. Troyes	30	12	6	12	37-34	

WORLD

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

Aberdeen to UEFA Cup?

Ten-man Aberdeen boosted their chances of clinching a UEFA Cup place next season after holding Scottish Premier League rivals Livingston to a goalless draw at Almondvale on Saturday.

A point keeps Aberdeen in third place with 51 points from 33 matches, two more than Livingston who remain fourth. The visitors had to work hard to enjoy a share of the spoils following the first-half dismissal of Darren Young.

Young saw red in the 33rd minute for picking up his second yellow card after clattering into Livingston's Spanish striker David Fernandez. Freddy Arpinon and Garry O'Connor grabbed the goals that earned Hibernian a 2-1 win over Dundee United at Tannadice.

Arpinon volleyed Hibernian ahead seven minutes before the break from Ulises de la Cruz's cross before O'Connor's deflected effort doubled the Edinburgh club's lead. Steven Thompson headed home from Stuart Duff's cross to give

the home side hope but Hibernian held on for three deserved points.

St Johnstone stunned Hearts with a 3-1 win at Tynecastle to keep their slim survival hopes alive.

Stillian Petrov's spectacular effort in their FA Cup tie with Ayr.

Tommy Lovenkrands

and a Graeme Jones penalty put Saints 3-0 at half-time before Gary Wales pulled one back for Hearts. Dunfermline captured a top six place with a hard-fought 2-0 victory over Dundee at East End Park with Barry Nicholson and Stevie Crawford netting for the home side. After this weekend's matches the league will be split in two for the final rounds of the season, clubs in the top six playing against one another, while the bottom half battle it out among themselves.

This innovation was introduced last season in a bid to make for a more interesting finale because, invariably, Celtic or Rangers have long since run away with the title by this stage.

SCOTTISH FA CUP SEMI FINALS

Celtic remain on course for the double after beating First Division Ayr United 3-0 to book their place in the Scottish Cup final.

Martin O'Neill's men, just one win away from retaining their Scottish Premier League title, won thanks to three second-half goals in their semi-final clash at Hampden Park.

Celtic's leading marksman Henrik Larsson opened the scoring just after half-time and Alan Thompson netted twice in the final nine minutes to set up a potential Old Firm final.

Larsson ended some stiff Ayr resistance in the 49th minute. Frenchman Didier Agathe sped past Pat McGinlay down the right and sent over a low cross which Larsson scooped high into the net.

Thompson curled his second with three minutes remaining after John Hartson had squandered a good chance.

Two goals from Rangers midfielder Christian Nerlinger and another from captain Barry Ferguson was enough to see off first-division Partick Thistle in the semi-final of the Scottish Cup at Hampden Park on Sunday and book a place in the final with Celtic.

Rangers took the lead with their first serious attack of the game in the 11th minute. Norway international Tore Andre Flo found Nerlinger in space and the former Borussia Dortmund striker gave Partick keeper Kenny Arthur no chance with a fierce left-footed shot.

Rangers finally established a two-goal cushion in the 72nd minute when Nerlinger picked up a pass from Ferguson, played the ball out to substitute Peter Lovenkrands on the wing and fired Dane's cross into the back of the net.

Rangers made it three six minutes later when Arthurs was beaten to a cross by Flo and Ferguson had the simple task of prodding the ball into the goal from close range.

Dundee United 1 Hibernian 2, Hearts 1 St. Johnstone 3, Livingston 0 Aberdeen 0, Dunfermline 2 Dundee 0, Rangers 5 Kilmarnock 0, Motherwell 0 Celtic 4.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pts
1. Celtic	33	29	3	1	78-15	90
2. Rangers	33	23	8	2	75-23	77
3. Aberdeen	33	15	6	12	46-43	51
4. Livingston	33	13	10	10	40-35	49
5. Dunfermline	33	12	7	14	39-52	43
6. Hearts	33	12	6	15	44-46	42
7. Kilmarnock	33	11	9	13	37-46	42
8. Dundee	33	10	7	16	35-50	37
9. Dundee United	33	9	8	16	32-56	35
10. Hibernian	33	8	10	15	43-51	34
11. Motherwell	33	9	6	18	42-61	33
12. St. Johnstone	33	5	4	24	23-56	19

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Dortmund keep heat on Leverkusen

Bundesliga leaders Bayer Leverkusen, fresh from their Champions' League win over Deportivo, took the lead on Saturday against 1860 Munich just before half-time through Zoltan Sebescen - and never looked back.

Striker Ulf Kirsten made the points safe with a goal just after the break before Yildiray Basturk added a third and Kirsten finished the 4-0 rout.

Leverkusen are now four points clear of second-placed Borussia Dortmund, who play on Sunday, and will be pleased they showed no ill effects from the absence of midfield star Michael Ballack through suspension.

Bayern Munich goalkeeper Oliver Kahn had warned his teammates they could kiss the title goodbye if they failed to beat FC Cologne, but Bayern struggled to make the breakthrough against the bottom-placed club.

Brazilian star Giovane Elber finally came up with the opening goal on 64 minutes and Hasan Salihamidzic marked his league return with a goal in the closing stages, before Elber added his second to make it 3-0. BV Borussia Dortmund ruthlessly disposed of FC Energie Cottbus 3-0 to maintain their hopes of claiming the Bundesliga title. Ewerthon and Rosicky made Cottbus pay with two quick goals. Rosicky was the creator of the opening goal, with his pass into the penalty area finding Jan Koller who played in Ewerthon to fire home from close range.

It was the impressive Rosicky who added the second, playing a one-two with fellow countryman Koller and holding his nerve to slot past Tomislav Pipica from eight metres. Giuseppe Reina wrapped up the win nine minutes from time when he latched on to Evanilson's lofted pass, controlled the ball and slotted past the unprotect Pipica. Diego Klimowicz and Martin Petrov scored second-half goals as VfL Wolfsburg overcame a first-half onslaught to defeat SV Werder Bremen and all but seal their Bundesliga survival in Sunday's other game. Wolfsburg had goalkeeper Claus Reitmeier to thank for a series of critical first-half saves which kept them in the game.

Victory sees Wolfsburg move 14 points clear of the relegation zone after opening the season with seven straight defeats, and within six points of Bremen, whose European ambitions were checked by defeat. They are now nine points adrift of fifth place with just six games to play.

Schalke 04, still without Emile Mpenza, went ahead against Kaiserslautern through their other Belgium star, Marc Wijmots, just before the break.

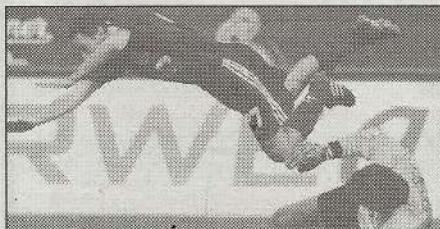
The Red Devils fell further behind when Andreas Moller netted on the hour and Victor Agali rounded off a convincing win for Schalke, who remain level with Bayern in the third and final Champions' League position.

Hertha Berlin had recorded five wins and a draw since interim boss Falko Gotz replaced Jürgen Röber and they continued their fine run against injury-ravaged FC Nuremberg.

Alex Alves scored early on and the Brazilian doubled the lead on 33 minutes to complete a 2-0 win. Berlin star Marcelinho could even afford to miss a first-half penalty.

Andreas Jakobsson broke the deadlock for Hansa Rostock in the northern derby against Hamburg with a goal on 51 minutes, before the visitors equalised through Bosnian star Sergej Barbarez. The game ended 1-1.

Struggling St Pauli suffered more woe as Krassimir Balakov gave Stuttgart the lead 15 minutes from time. Sean Dundee made it 2-0 with nine minutes left before Mathias Cenci set up a tense finish.



Leverkusen's Oliver Neuville flies through the air after being fouled by 1860's Simon Jentzsch.

Borussia (D) 3 Energie 0, Wolfsburg 2 Werder 0, Bayern 3 Cologne 0, Hansa 1 Hamburger 1, Hertha 2 Nurnberg 0, Freiburg 0 Borussia (M) 1, Schalke 04 3 Kaiserslautern 0, Bayer 4 1860 Munchen 0, St. Pauli 1 Stuttgart 2.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pt
1. Bayer	28	18	5	5	67-31	59
2. Borussia (D)	28	17	7	4	50-23	58
3. Bayern	28	16	6	6	54-20	54
4. Schalke 04	28	16	6	6	46-27	54
5. Hertha	28	15	7	6	53-29	52
6. Kaiserslautern	28	15	4	9	50-41	49
7. Werder	28	13	4	11	39-33	43
8. 1860 Munchen	28	12	3	13	41-47	39
9. Stuttgart	28	10	8	10	33-33	38
10. Wolfsburg	28	10	7	11	48-41	37
11. Hamburger	28	9	8	11	40-46	35
12. Borussia (M)	28	8	9	11	30-40	33
13. Hansa	28	8	6	14	28-41	30
14. Energie	28	8	5	15	28-49	29
15. Nurnberg	28	7	4	17	25-50	25
16. Freiburg	28	5	9	14	28-49	24
17. St. Pauli	28	4	9	15	29-53	21
18. Cologne	28	4	7	17	17-53	19

GREEK FIRST DIVISION



Kyriakou of Panathinaikos slides in on Olympiakos star Giovanni in the heated derby match which ended one a piece.

Last minute penalty sparks mayhem in Greek grudge match

Referee Antonis Efthymiadis was escorted from the pitch with head wounds at the end of Panathinaikos' 1-1 draw with Olympiakos at the Leoforos after an almighty melee involving home fans, players and officials - all incensed by the award of a late penalty to the visitors.

Efthymiadis caused an uproar in injury-time when, with Panathinaikos leading 1-0, he awarded the Piraeus club a spot kick after adjudging that Michalis Konstantinou had fouled Olympiakos full-back Stelios Venetidis inside the area.

Panathinaikos players responded furiously to the decision, but Predrag Djordjevic duly converted the spot kick to draw his side level before the referee blew the final whistle.

Panathinaikos had taken the lead with 15 minutes remaining when Giorgos Karagounis spun his way into the box before threading a ball across the six-yard line to Emmanuel Olisadebe to side foot home.

Bottom-placed Panachaiki were no match for AEK in a one-sided contest. Two goals from Vasillis Tartzas and one each from Akiis Zikos and Christos Maladenis were enough to see off the visitors, who only managed to pull one back deep into injury time through Nenad Vulsevic.

AEK coach Fernando Santos said: "We knew it would be a hard game against a team in desperate need of points and as expected they came here seeking a draw."

Santos' mood changed, though, when questioned about the exclusion of goalkeeper Elias Amatidis. "I am in charge of the team and as long as I am in charge I will decide who does or does not play," he fumed.

PAOK made easy work of a potentially tricky tie, winning 3-1 at Ethnikos Asteras, and are now poised to challenge for a Champions' League position.

Giorgos Georgiadis was the hero for the visitors scoring two goals and reaching 100 in total in the top division.

"The match was not of high quality but at this stage in the league all that is important is winning the points," he declared. PAOK's other goal came from Vasillis Borbokis while the hosts had briefly equalised with a header from Michalis Berneanou.

Xanthi moved closer to their target of a Uefa Cup place with a 1-0 home win against Ionikos. The goal that settled the tie came early on when Dimitris Zografakis converted an accurate cross by Abderrahim Ouakili. An Ieroklis Stoltidis penalty nine minutes from time salvaged a point for Iraklis against OFI. Iraklis dominated most of the match but looked vulnerable to the quick break. OFI had taken the lead in the 39th minute with a goal by Pavlos Adamos.

Panionios threw away any slim chances they had of claiming a European position with a disappointing goalless draw at home against Aegaleo. The visitors were impressive and could have stolen victory in the dying moments had not goalkeeper Jaroslav Drobny finger-tipped a shot by Yiannis Chlors over the crossbar.

Akratitos took a giant step towards avoiding the drop with a 1-0 victory at ARIS. The only goal came shortly after the interval through a powerful shot by Lefteris Velentzas.

Panionios 0 Aegaleo 0, Aris Salonika 0
Akratitos 1, Xanthi 1 Ionikos 0, Iraklis 1 OFI Crete 1, Panathinaikos 1 Olympiakos 1, Ethnikos Aster 1 PAOK Salonika 3, AEK Athens 4 Panachaiki Patras 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AEK Athens	21	15	1	5	48	21	46
Olympiakos	21	13	6	2	52	23	45
Panathinaikos	21	12	6	3	37	17	42
PAOK	21	12	5	4	41	28	41
Xanthi	21	10	6	5	30	19	36
Iraklis	21	7	8	6	26	27	29
Aris	21	7	7	7			

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

After Round 24

	TOTAL									PTS	HOME					AWAY				
	P	W	D	L	BYE	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	
PERTH GLORY	22	15	6	1	2	49	21	51	11	8	3	0	23	8	11	7	3	1	26	13
NEWCASTLE UNITED	23	10	11	2	1	32	20	41	12	7	5	0	17	6	11	3	6	2	15	14
OLYMPIC SHARKS	22	11	4	7	2	31	20	37	11	6	4	1	16	6	11	5	0	6	15	12
BRISBANE STRIKERS	22	10	6	6	2	37	29	36	11	6	2	3	20	13	11	4	6	3	17	16
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	22	11	2	9	2	39	35	35	12	6	2	4	19	18	10	5	0	5	20	17
PARRAMATTA POWER	23	9	4	10	1	31	30	31	12	6	1	5	16	14	11	3	3	5	15	16
SOUTH MELBOURNE	22	8	6	8	2	23	20	30	12	5	2	5	14	13	10	3	4	3	9	6
NORTHERN SPIRIT	22	8	6	8	2	29	35	30	11	5	2	4	14	17	11	3	4	4	15	18
MARCONI STALLIONS	22	7	6	9	2	28	31	27	11	5	3	3	18	15	11	2	3	6	10	16
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	22	6	7	9	2	25	34	25	9	3	1	6	10	15	12	3	4	5	14	19
SYDNEY UNITED	22	5	5	12	2	24	35	20	11	1	4	6	12	21	11	5	1	5	15	14
ADELAIDE CITY	22	3	8	11	2	24	36	17	11	3	5	3	17	17	11	0	3	8	7	19
KINGZ FC	22	3	5	14	1	25	50	14	11	3	3	5	12	27	11	0	2	9	13	26

NEWCASTLE UNITED 2
(J Griffiths 14, A Moreira 82 pen)
KINGZ FC 0

Venue: Energy Australia Stadium. Crowd: 9,544. Referee: M. Breeze.
Cautions: R Middleby (NU) 33, A Moreira (NU) 82, M. Theoklitos (KFC) 81.

Teams: **NEWCASTLE UNITED**: Beltrame, Prentice (Hughes 78), Bingley, Wilson, Griffiths, Tsekenis, Baillie, Blagojevic, Schirripa (Dodd 68), Masi (Moreira 58), Middleby.
KINGZ FC: Theoklitos, Perry, Osman, Goutzioulis, Urlović, Ngata, Campbell (Wylie 78), Markovski (Banks 55), Burton, Jackson, Douglas.

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 1
(N Budin 31)
PERTH GLORY 1

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium. Crowd: 2,538. Referee: B. Williams.
Cautions: C Veart (ACF) 91.

Teams: **ADELAIDE CITY FORCE**: Cagalj, Kemp, Kovacevic, Pantelis, Veart, Saraceno (Goulding 88), Vidmar, Tunbridge, Rees, Karlovic, Budin.
PERTH GLORY: Matassa, Horsley, Harnwell, Deans, Miller, Hassell (Naven 84), Junior, Mori, Faria (Garcia 74), Tarka, Mrdja (Edwards 84).

PARRAMATTA POWER 2
(D Brown 19, B Holman 40)
SYDNEY UNITED 0

Venue: Parramatta Stadium. Crowd: 2,991. Referee: E. Lennie.
Cautions: C Menapi (SU) 26, B Santalab (PP) 43, M Bosnar (SU) 69, D Watkins (SU) 76.

Teams: **PARRAMATTA POWER**: Reddy, Barrett, Langdon (Kwasnik 72), Tobin, O'Sullivan, Brown, Holman, Elrich (Buonavoglia 85), Vrkic, Eagleton, Bennett (Thompson 80).
SYDNEY UNITED: Knezevic, Savoca, Cunico, Moric (Watkins 46), Mendez, Santalab, Deur, Genc (Bosnar 67), Menapi, Cindric, Sinozic (Talevski 46).

BRISBANE STRIKERS 1
(J Rose 88)
SOUTH MELBOURNE 0

Venue: Ballymore. Crowd: 2,792. Referee: B. Hugo.
Cautions: Nil.

Teams: **BRISBANE STRIKERS**: Kearton, Alagich, Stefanutto, McKain, McLaren, Grierson (Baird 75), Rech, Webber (Rose 87), Trajanovski, Carbone, Drake (McKay 65).
SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Durakovic, Panopoulos, Coveny (Buljan 81), Trimboli, Sekulovski, Murdocca, Kisnorbo, Boutsianis.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 4
(J Porter 28, A Da Costa 54, S Horvat 85, X Sulemani 87)
WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2
(S Young 52, G Sharland 83)

Venue: Knights Stadium. Crowd: 3,915. Referee: P. Mur.
Cautions: A Castro (WW) 10, G Souris (WW) 25, D Mennillo (WW) 29.

Teams: **MELBOURNE KNIGHTS**: John, R Vargas, Horvat, Marth, Marusic, Porter, Da Costa (Sulemani 74), Kiratzoglou (Jolic 69), A Vargas, Pelikan, De Jesus.
WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Anastasiadis, Souris, Ceccoli, Stanton, Castro (Perinich 69), Young, Sekulovski, Anthopoulos (Sullivan 87), Huxley (Sharland 80), Mennillo, Wells.

OLYMPIC SHARKS 2
(D Macallister 25 pen, A Juric 36)
MARCONI STALLIONS 2

Venue: Toyota Park. Crowd: 5,121. Referee: C. Diomis.
Cautions: W Srhoj (OS) 91, T Pondejek (OS) 91, D Longo (MS) 18, S Webb (MS) 65, B Renaud (MS) 67, R Bove (MS) 75.

Teams: **OLYMPIC SHARKS**: Bolton, Laybutt, Srhoj, Wilson, Pondejek, Macallister, Halpin (Caravella 90), North, Harris (Agius 52), Ishida (Augerinos 93), Juric.
MARCONI STALLIONS: Turnbull, Beauchamp, Costanzo, Longo, Care (Tome 46), Renaud, Maisano, Bozinovski (Brosque 76), Webb (Afkos 76), Brownlie, Bove.

BYE - NORTHERN SPIRIT

PLAYER OF THE WEEK



Royce Brownlie: Eight goals in four matches, a double against the Sharks last week, it looks like no-one can stop the goal-scoring machine from Marconi.

LEADING GOALSCORERS		
Name	Club	Total
MORI Damian	Perth Glory	17
FOSTER Paul	Brisbane Strikers	13
CARDOZO Pablo	Northern Spirit	12
DESPOTOVSKI Bobby	Perth Glory	11
PORTER Joel	Melbourne Knights	11
BROWNIE Royce	Marconi	11
MILICIC Ante	Olympic Sharks	10
DA COSTA Toto	Melbourne Knights	10
GRIFFITHS Joel	Newcastle	10
RECH Fernando	Brisbane Strikers	9

ROUND 25

THURSDAY MARCH 28

W'gong Wolves vs South Melbourne

GOOD FRIDAY MARCH 29

Kingz FC vs Adelaide City

EASTERN SATURDAY MARCH 30

Marconi Stallions vs Brisbane Strikers

Melbourne Knights vs Northern Spirit

Perth Glory vs Olympic Sharks

SUNDAY MARCH 31

Sydney United vs Newcastle United

Parramatta Power - bye